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THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

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Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians
(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by W. G. Smith, Westminster Public Libraries

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VOL. 50. NO. 1

JANUARY, 1957

Introducing Your New President—

Miss E. J. WILLSON

Each year your President is accorded the privilege of being allowed to address you in the January issue of the *Assistant Librarian*, and I should like to wish you all the traditional "Happy New Year," and hope that I shall be able to meet and talk with many of you in your own Divisions during 1957.

I am immensely proud of the honour your Council has done me, and I am looking forward to presiding over a Council which, for the first time, includes a quota of under-thirties, elected as such. The A.A.L. is an association run on behalf of the younger members; it was therefore a great pleasure to find that of the twenty-one members who were standing for election, nine were under thirty. I should like to thank all the candidates, and, to those who were not elected this time, say, please try again because while, for a few, getting on the A.A.L. Council is a matter of geography, of literary ability or of luck, for the majority it is the reward for hard work at Divisional level. There is no mysterious "them" who run the Council—it is made up of officers and national councillors elected by you and representatives appointed by the Divisional Committees you elect. (The "officers of the Council," appointed by it, do not vote). Any matter you want discussed can be brought to your Divisional Committee and by your representatives to the Council, which is of all such bodies the least cabalistic; it is open to observers who sit in at Council meetings, it is reported on to Divisional Committees and your Honorary Secretary can be trusted to see that his reports in the *Assistant* are candid and readable.

During 1957, the A.A.L. Council will again be considering the organisation of the Library Association and its place in it. That ideas about the Library Association, its Sections and Branches, its membership, individual or institutional, should change and develop is a proof that it is a living organism. We are promised developments in the examination syllabus which your Council, which is represented on L.A. Education Committees, will watch with care and there will be ample opportunity for discussion before any changes are made. What else 1957 will bring I do not know, but I hope I may safely prophesy a worth-while conference at Winchester, stimulating meetings in all Divisions, a lively publishing programme and success in Examinations for all who sit and know they deserve to pass!

Talking Points

In this issue we welcome our new President, Miss Willson, of Hammersmith Public Libraries, and bid farewell to the past President, Mr. Tynemouth, of Newcastle, with contributions from them both. Miss Willson has been one of the most active librarians in helping the younger assistants for many years both in London and, through correspondence courses, in the provinces. Some of her most generous acts have been performed anonymously. All the more welcome, therefore, is this opportunity to say how deeply those who know her personally appreciate her example to us all.

In Mr. Tynemouth we had a leader in the best sense of the word. His statesmanlike advice was respected from the most rebellious quarters of the A.A.L. to the most exalted regions of the L.A. Council. He has now been elected to the L.A. Council for the next three years—on which we congratulate both him and the L.A.

NALGO. Both Miss Willson and Mr. Tynemouth are keen supporters of NALGO. The L.A. has recently been urging members to take a more active interest in their trade unions and we are glad to see our presidents leading the way. Another prominent A.A.L. man who is active in NALGO is National Councillor A.L. Carver of Portsmouth, whose latest contribution to the closer links we are being asked to forge is to write a 32-page history of the Portsmouth Branch in celebration of its jubilee. In sending us a copy, Mr. Carver hopes that it will encourage younger members to attempt similar tasks when the opportunity offers.

The Annual Index of the *Assistant Librarian* for 1956 is sent to subscribers with this issue. Others may obtain a copy by sending a 2d. stamped addressed envelope to the Honorary Sales Officer, 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21.

The First Professional Examination has started with an appalling muddle. In the summer the examiners' marking showed that only 23 per cent of candidates had passed, but the assessors nearly doubled this figure by pushing through candidates whom the examiners had failed. Why? Did they consider the examiners incompetent? Or was the upgrading a political manoeuvre because they were afraid of the results of their own policy of making this a really professional examination? The assessors are doing a poor service to students by encouraging nearly half of those who passed to think they can tackle the Registration examination when the evidence indicates that they cannot.

The second examination last November will also not produce a true result; this time because of a serious blunder on the first paper. Candidates should have been asked to answer three questions out of six but this instruction was omitted from the examination paper. London candidates were told soon after they started, some provincial candidates were told half an hour after the start while others were not informed at all. Apart from London, the position must have led to doubt and confusion in the minds of candidates, affecting their performance not only on this paper but throughout the day. We all make mistakes but the fact that a more rigorous system has been introduced since the incident occurred indicates that something was wrong with the administration. We understand that considerable leniency will be exercised in favour of the affected candidates but the affect of this sort of thing on morale varies with individuals and a fair assessment is impossible to achieve.

No Mean City is a novel which has been long out of print, and yet is frequently asked for in lending libraries. At last a new edition has appeared from Neville Spearman, at 15s. 0d. This was the direct result of representations made by Norman Tomlinson, Secretary of the London and Home Counties Branch, in his campaign for the reprinting of older works still in

demand (*King's Row* is also under consideration). We hope that sales to libraries will justify Mr. Tomlinson's enterprise. Already some publishers are consulting him on likely library sales of some future publications and the prestige of librarians with publishers is likely to be raised considerably if this policy continues. All this should, of course, have been done centrally by the Library Association but, in the absence of initiative from that source, we must be grateful for the energy of one Branch Secretary.

Anti-Snob Campaign. Manchester Public Libraries staged recently an exhibition on work study. Along with exhibits of efficiency from I.C.I. and many other important industrial firms was one showing how method study had led to an improvement in the handling of new books on delivery at the library. This direct linking of the library with life in the factories seems to be the right answer to the authority member who challenged us at the L.A. conference to stop being snobbish about the humanities. A most useful catalogue of Manchester's stock on the subject was also produced for the exhibition.

By a vote of 68 to 8 a Manchester and District Divisional Meeting supported a motion "That this house still supports the 1955 L.A. proposals." Mr. James Dearden, in drawing our attention to this, comments "The L.A. should take heart and try again. To-morrow's librarians are behind it. It might also take note of the sense that prevails when authority members are excluded from a professional discussion."

"Young Lion Daniel Hay" was the description given in the October issue to one of the main supporters of small libraries. We asked then how he could defend the existence of the independent public library at Knutsford with a bookfund of £310. Mr. Hay, however, is no more tolerant of some small libraries than of certain larger ones and writes: "Alas! you are over-generous. Knutsford has not enjoyed so generous a book-fund in recent years. According to the L.A. statistics its estimated book-fund for 1956-7 is £250; for 1955-6 it was £220; for 1954-5, £120. If it were the worst in the country I should be happy. There is Banbridge (pop. 5,500) spending £82 p.a. on books, and Maybole (pop. 4,766), £9." Welcome, Mr. Hay!

From a student's essay: The L.A. was formed in 1877 and was granted a Royal Charter in 1898, making its doings legal.

W. G. SMITH.

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Election of A.A.L. Councillors for 1957

GENERAL CATEGORY.		CANDIDATES UNDER 30 YEARS OLD.	
Elected.	No. of Votes	Elected.	No. of Votes
W. Howard Phillips	1237	Miss B. M. Walker	905
E. F. Ferry	970	M. T. Sleightholm	769
A. C. Jones	939	D. E. Davinson	689
A. Ll. Carver	930		
Miss G. E. C. Edwards	891	Not Elected.	
H. R. Klieneberger	813	G. E. Smith	667
		B. Stradling	600
Not Elected.		L. E. Taylor	495
A. G. S. Ensor	798	L. E. S. Darby	442
F. J. E. Hurst	707	A. R. Thomas	340
R. B. Bateman	706	W. Davies	333
P. W. Staton	680		
H. Smith	679		
J. L. Powell	404		
K. Laugharne	332		

(Signed) Miss E. J. WILLSON, *Presiding Officer.*

A.A.L. CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Revision Courses, March-June, 1956

A limited number of *Registration* and *Final* courses will be available to run from March to June. These short period courses are reserved exclusively for those students who have already sat the examination in the subjects required.

The closing date for application is *20th February*, but forms for *Final* revision courses will be accepted up to one week after publication of the winter examinations results if this is later than *20th February*. After these dates no application will be considered.

Full Length Courses

Applications for *First Professional Examination*, *Registration*, and *Final*

courses beginning *Spring 1956*, must be completed and returned by *28th February*. Full particulars of the courses offered are given in the current edition of the *Student's Handbook*. (L.A. 3s. 6d., plus 6d. postage).

Forms, Fees and Enquiries

Forms may be obtained from the A.A.L. Hon. Education and Sales Officer, Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A., 49, Halstead Gardens, London. N.21, who will be pleased to answer any enquiries concerning the courses. Stamped addressed envelopes for replies would be appreciated. The fee for each course is £2 10s., plus 10s. extra to students in Africa, America, Asia and Australasia.

Wanted Secondhand :

Brown. Manual of library economy.

Doubleday. Primer of librarianship.

Harrod. Librarian's glossary.

Flexner. Making books work.

McColvin. Reference library stock.

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Mr. Alan Thomas, of Lewisham, confesses to being a little overwhelmed at the reaction in our last issue to his letter on moral book selection. We now print two further contributions together with his reply.

CENSORSHIP

Filling Vacuums—or Journey Into Space

By J. C. R. Yeats, Aberdeen Public Library

Mr. Alan Thomas's letter sought to express an idea which is true enough, that a profession stands for something of social value, otherwise it isn't a profession. We librarians like to feel that we are doing something more than merely satisfying a demand for print, just as the conductor of an orchestra does more than satisfy a demand for noise. Supplying print to the whole town or county, however, is by no means the straightforward problem that Mr. Thomas appears to think it is. He is quite right, however, to ask for a statement of public library principles.

As I understand the matter, we are doing three things:—

(1) We are providing literature for people who have finished their formal education. After the State has made its light or heavy investment in training an individual, we are the main agency charged with the task of providing the material for keeping him in good intellectual condition. We also correct the ill-effects of excessive specialisation, if the patient is willing.

(2) We are providing the literature needed by persons still being formally educated, although the main responsibility for this falls on other types of library.

(3) We are providing recreational reading. We do not do this in the same spirit as the commercial librarian. Our salaries do not depend on higher or lower issues, and we take account of the varying merits of books, apart from their circulation value. We also know that the urge to recreational reading arises naturally from the strains and stresses of life. The process can be likened to the recharging of a battery. Now, just as a battery can be ruined by incorrect charging, so can a human being, but there is this difference: a human being is not compelled to go to the same shop twice to be recharged!

Now it is an observable fact that most of our work is with the third category, and it is unfortunately true that we know very little about the effects of such reading. Nevertheless, the need for recreational reading exists, and if the psychologists are right (and our own founders in the last century), the need for recreation would be met, but for us, in other, less desirable ways. It therefore appears to me to be legitimate to meet the need out of public funds.

It is not entirely clear from Mr. Thomas's letter which kinds of literature he considers immoral. If he refers to certain political or ethical writings, the tolerance of these is one of the penalties of living in a democracy. In literature, it is difficult to steer clear of the bawdy or even the blasphemous without using bowdlerised versions or leaving great gaps. Has Mr. Alan Thomas reflected on how easy it is for the true smut-hound to pose as a student of literature? It is probably better to supply all but the bawdiest on the open shelves, and hope that our readers will take them in their stride. Mere deprivation would probably only drive them elsewhere, or leave them entirely at the mercy of the popular dailies or weeklies. Mercifully, one can graduate from earthy to more spiritual reading, though it takes time, and a gradually

acquired sense of discrimination.

I remember a man (far, far away from any library) who once pestered me to read *The Road to Buenos Aires*. Eventually I read it, and it turned out to be a kind of cautionary tale about what Dewey calls the social evil. It was about as suggestive as *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Now, had a copy been available, perhaps I could have induced my friend to read this, and then I might have got him to try *Arms and the Man*, and so on (or something by Wells, if Shaw proved too difficult). That, Mr. Editor, is our problem. I hope Mr. Thomas won't think that I am asking him to forget his principles, still less that I am mocking him. I just want him to realise that creating a vacuum is no solution. Our job is to fill vacuums.

Wider Morals

By Michael Donnelly, Shropshire County Library

I should like Mr. Thomas to know that his remarks on the morals of book selection in the October issue have at least one zealous supporter. It is quite certain that books can be responsible for many forms of emotional disturbance and aberration; the more skilful the style, the more power have the thoughts of which it is the vehicle to sink irretrievably into the subconscious mind. I remember that Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* affected me more profoundly than a paper-backed "horror" could ever have done.

But readers, Shaw tells us in one of his prefaces, "... want police news, divorce news or anything which has an aphrodisiac effect" on them. Presumably the masses who never use the library are addicted to such a diet, but are we justified in providing it for our readers? Most librarians are reluctant to express their opinions on matters concerning censorship. If they have any views on the subject they often find it best to keep them to themselves. The general public take a strong dislike to any suggestion of guidance, moral or otherwise. We may think we know what is best for our readers, but it is often wisest not to make the fact public. By all means let us continue the policy of evasive explanation for which we have justly earned ourselves repute.

I want, however, to go a step further than Mr. Thomas and consider a very much more important aspect of book selection. Most thinking people to-day are concerned not so much about the sexual content of books as about the prevalence of violence in much of our literature. Sadism is but part of this wider evil. To find pleasure in reading of wars to come between countries the names of which there has been no effort made to conceal is to admit their possibility. To admit this is to contemplate the downfall of civilisation. Charles Morgan has much to say on the subject of thought in his preface *On Transcending the Age of Violence*. So has Bertrand Russell when, in his essay, *Reflections on my Eightieth Birthday*, he looks ahead to the suppression of things which nourish the hatreds of our time.

There are some who will say that violence in literature is a necessary means of escape: a safety valve for the reader's emotions which can have no adverse effect on the reader. Do not believe them. We have seen too much of the power of war-time propaganda and know of the efforts of Governments to control the Press from the beginnings of printing. Allow me to offer several suggestions as to how we may combat this menace, as I feel it most assuredly to be.

Book selection. Resist the temptation to overload classes 340, 350, 940, etc. merely to improve non-fiction issue figures. Buy, and so create a demand for, books describing constructive efforts for world peace. In the fiction category, let us reject all those novels which rely for their appeal on violence and sensation.

Display. Dr. Savage would have us refrain from "banging the big drum of militarism" in our book displays. We can have no sounder precept than this. We cannot be criticised for emphasising the more humane works among our bookstock.

Work with children. An eminent man of letters told me recently that children's books "need more blood in them." I hope this is not a widespread belief in our profession, but to those who hold it, Enid Blyton could give the obvious reply. We do not need descriptions of commando technique to hold a child's attention and encourage the desire to read more.

Staff education. Can we never convince new members of the staff that there *are* librarians who have working philosophies of their own; that a librarian's is a worthy calling? On the occasion of our Centenary, John Masefield wrote: "The Public Libraries of the country have been of priceless benefit to millions of citizens. Our civilisation depends on them, more than on any other body, for the maintenance of the threatened humanities." With words such as these as our stay and clear principles of service to guide us, we can work to hasten the time when what is dross in the province of printed books will no longer have power to claim so much of our attention.

Alan Thomas Replies

As the Secretary reported, there were few fireworks in November, but a great many were let off in the December issue. Some correspondents read into my letter meanings which were not there, the better enabling them to air their own pet views with controversial heat and gusto. This maintains the lively tone of our journal, but obscures the real issues.

It was precisely because of the wide diversity of practice to-day (due to individual judgments by librarians or small committees) that the letter demanded a thorough corporate professional investigation. Irish methods were indicated as a rich field for our studies, and they were not necessarily advocated here in whole or in part.

Book banning and censorship were not even mentioned, and there is a widespread confusion between these two, both of which are distinct from *careful assistance to readers*. The idea was to build up a small, closed access collection of "dubious" books, so that a reader's choice of one of these works would be fully conscious and totally deliberate, approached via a Catalogue, and not, repeat *not*, due to sheer accident in pulling the book from the open shelf.

Readers are sometimes distressed and shocked by their careless chance selections, and out of consideration for them we have a duty to allow them to make a free but deliberate choice of a morally questionable volume.

The present practice in England on the availability of controversial books and periodicals is so utterly uneven, and the opinions of the members of our profession so much at variance with one another, that we must clarify our ideas and decide just where we are going to draw the line. It is unprofessional and unscientific to leave such vital matters to "common sense."

The Right to Read

—THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS OF Mr. W. TYNEMOUTH

President of the A.A.L. for 1956

A presidential address is an opportunity for a man to express his opinion on the general causes and principles of his work. This is not the first occasion, nor will it be the last, on which an attempt has been made to do this, usually under the more pretentious title of a philosophy of librarianship. In these days, when so many words and so much writing in the professional Press is concerned with organization and methods, it is as well that we should from time to time pause to consider basic principles.

Let it be clearly understood that I *am* concerned about more efficient methods of book issuing and that I believe insufficient attention is paid to costing (i.e. proper use of statistics) and too much, especially in annual reports, to statistical nonsense. Nevertheless, at the present time, when some librarians, who are really frustrated engineers, are devoting so much time to automatic methods of doing this and that, all over the world, the fundamental right (to a librarian) of the freedom to read is being challenged or suppressed. Perhaps too much is said about the freedom of speech. Most of us, particularly, if we have been in the Forces, know that even when we are denied the freedom to speak, we still have the freedom to think; but when you deny to a man the freedom to read, you take away from him not only the freedom, but the ability to think. If you deny a man access to books, you deny to the garden of his mind both seed and fertiliser.

We, as librarians, have a duty to see that our fellow men continue to enjoy the freedom to read. In some parts of the world there is "aught for your comfort." However, we as British librarians can be justly proud of the part played by men like Sydney and Gardner in India; by the efforts, however maligned by certain newspapers, of the British Council and by the contributions made by our library schools in the training of students from overseas. It is pleasing to know that in helping others to take important steps towards higher standards of education and culture, British librarianship is able to play so large a part. Nevertheless, we ourselves must be constantly on our guard to see that our own much cherished freedom is not whittled away by this faction or that, and that we are always prepared to be worthy successors of those who have struggled for the freedom of the mind since the days of *Areopagitica*.

It is unfortunate that at this time when British influence depends not upon navies and armies, or even atomic bombs, but upon our culture and the example of our way of life, that our eyes, ears and minds are being subjected to an ever-increasing bombardment from our former American colonies. The cinema, I suppose, began it, but the tendency has spread. London, once the theatrical centre of the English-speaking world, flourishes—or at least seems to live—on "reprints" of American successes. Shaftesbury Avenue is becoming a provincial dependency of Broadway. Our "teahouses of the August moon" do not reflect our heritage. In broadcasting, we held, and still hold on to, our own high standards, and did in television until someone allowed "independent" Americanization in the tide of detergent publicity. (Cleanliness, what horrors are committed in thy name).

In the world of books, amalgamations and holding companies have made nonsense of the reliance we used to place on the publisher's

imprint. More obvious has been the increase in the number of American titles "published" in this country. This Americanization has helped to play havoc with our sense of values—mass publicity, the best seller, and the magic of an established name are dominating the publishing world as they do in the U.S.A. The reviewer, the genuine critic, plays second fiddle in the orchestra of publicity, an orchestra large enough to drown an individual playing a wrong note.

It is, therefore, important that as librarians—bookmen and administrators—we watch our standards. By "bookmen" I do not mean only lovers of what we were once able to call "pure literature." Librarianship is no longer *exclusively* a literary profession. It is to be hoped that there will always be great libraries devoted to the humanities, and that we will always have in the profession men who have a deep personal interest in such literature; but with the growing emphasis on technology and technological education, it is essential that there should also be in our ranks those able to interpret this new writing, often written in a language all its own. This has, of course, been recognised by the Library Association, whose syllabus at Registration level permits the study of the literatures of science and technology, or of social and political ideas, instead of the history of English literature from Chaucer to Mills and Boon.

We must be careful of what people think, but must, of course, retain a sense of humour, which is really the same thing as a sense of proportion, so that we can stand Kingsley Amis, cartoons in *Punch*, and leg-pulling in general. After all, it was only when libraries became important enough to mean something that we were featured in the cartoons of *Punch* at all, but we must discredit the impression that libraries are moribund collections of dusty tomes housed in buildings in which the cathedral-like silence must never be broken. It is true that many of our buildings are bad, as well as unsuitable; it is all the more important, therefore, that the reputation of the stock and the service given by the staff should rise ever higher, and be enjoyed by an increasing number of people.

The public will always assess an individual library service and sometimes, in their general way, librarianship as a whole, by the standard of service they receive at their own service point. Not only is the reputation of a chief librarian in the hands of every assistant whom he permits the public to meet, but he may well be allowing that assistant the responsibility of giving an impression of librarianship as a whole. There is not time to discuss staffing, or recruitment, or training, in which I am particularly interested, nor time to say more than I have done about the equally important question of stock, but it would be timely to utter a reminder that the service is being judged by what each individual reader receives: by whether he gets what he wants—or an acceptable substitute.

Sometimes a substitute offered in place of a reader's original request is welcomed as an improvement on that request. This may well be because the bibliographical knowledge of a member of the staff has produced a later or more comprehensive book of which the reader knew nothing, but the "I won't buy A because we already have B" type of offering alternative service may well drive a reader who knows what he wants, and why, elsewhere or to distraction. After all, umbrellas and raincoats serve a similar purpose, but there are many times when one is no substitute for the other.

The importance of being educated is a title which someone could well use and make popular. Too often education is regarded as an end in itself. We should always drive home whenever we can the fact that

it is worse than useless to turn the end products of education out into a world which has an inadequate library service, because it is only an adequate library service which can enable school-leavers and graduates to make the fullest use of the knowledge and training they have received. Emerson said, " 'Tis the good reader that makes the good book." This is an over-simplification, but it remains true that only a good reader can extract from a book everything that is in it. We recognise without question that a good driver can get more out of a car than a poor driver but insufficient is done to ensure that education produces the maximum number of good readers.

I do not wish to enter into any local government controversy, but we must remember that it is an advantage at the moment, especially where finance and buildings are concerned, to be on the educational wagon—even as a trailer. There is no-one at Ministerial level (indeed, we could come very much further down) who is charged with any national responsibility for library services. It would seem that the present Government (and we have no reason to believe that Her Majesty's Opposition, as they have given no indication to the contrary, would be any better) are quite prepared to go ahead with a vast and expensive and vitally essential scheme for technological education without ensuring that the people so trained will have access to those books which will be as essential to them as the tools of their trade. Such people, potentially so important, without access to suitable libraries, will be as useful as an electric washer in an area not yet reached by the Grid. And similarly, a technician who has been trained to a high standard of efficiency, but who has not been given an understanding of the literature of his subject, has not been made aware of the means and necessity of keeping himself up to date. He will be only temporarily part of the driving force of industry: he is in fact a potential brake.

The lack of responsibility for libraries at Government level is more serious when some department decides to make life more difficult for us. There was, for example, no one at top level sufficiently interested to advise, guide, restrain, or, better still, sit upon Her Majesty's Postmaster General in his recent imposition of taxes on knowledge—for that is what the increase in postal charges, without the introduction of a real "book post" means. We urban creatures know of the effect on the purchase of single copies and on the increased cost of regional loans, but we should attempt to visualize the effect on the county library services. More especially we should consider the effect upon the reader in the remoter parts of this island, whose life is being made more difficult by the withholding, withdrawal or increasing cost of electricity, postal and transport services. This is becoming more and more a townsman's England. The failure to institute a real book post when postal services were being re-costed was a grievous blow at rural culture.

High Ministerial assistance is required. The need for real regional reference libraries, grant aided and not maintained as at present by the largest county borough in the area, is not likely to be fulfilled until some Government has interest and responsibility forced upon it. There is no reason, however, why, outside the provision of major reference libraries and an adequate inter-lending service, libraries should not continue as at present under local control.

There may be some necessity for the laying down of minimum standards (after all, the Government have very recently laid down standards for slaughterhouses), perhaps even for inspection, which the adequate would not fear and the best would welcome. There is nothing as good as local government at its best, but it is no argument in favour of local

control to say that control of almost everything but libraries and, significantly, cemeteries has been taken away. It is essential to prove that local control is necessary to give the best service: remembering at the same time that what higher authority is doing with branch railway lines, it would soon do with "uneconomic" library service points.

The Central Library in this ancient and historic City stands on the site of the Carliol Tower, which was part of the defences of the City against the Scots. The walls are down, the Tower gone—and to-day the Chairman of the Libraries Committee and the Head of the Newcastle School of Librarianship are Scots. The plaque which records the history of the site of the Library ends "The Tower was a defence against military assault. The Library fosters the arts of peace."

There is an unfortunate suggestion in this last phrase that those who love peace and the arts of peace have nothing to fear from outside. Assaults more deadly than military assault can be made against the mind. That is why we, as librarians, must be constantly on our guard in the interests of those whom we serve. It is more encouraging to remember that the first book issued from the Library I have been talking about was *Mill On liberty*.

If there is to be liberty of the mind, it is necessary for any librarian worthy of his salt to provide a service which offers the widest possible selection of all that is best in the world of books, supplemented by a trained and qualified staff: the whole having an air of efficiency, but still having a soul. Well administered, in fact.

This question, "Librarian or administrator?" is too often asked as though there was a choice between two mutually exclusive alternatives. This is not so. Administration is, after all, only the management of one's affairs. Those who think it possible for a bookman to live in an ivory tower should think of Prospero: dignity and the liberal arts were all his study and he completely neglected worldly ends. His fate was loss of status and five acts of blank verse on an uninhabited island. Even if there were no bitterness, there is undoubtedly regret in his, "Me, poor man, My library was Dukedom large enough."

On the other hand, I hope I never live to experience a library run by an administrator who is not a bookman, but this is only likely to happen under nationalization or if his predecessor (a bookman) had been so immersed in his books that he had ignored the management of his affairs—and most likely forgotten that books must have readers. Book selection implies at least as great a knowledge of demand as it does of supply if the result is not to be unbalanced: indeed, if it is to be selection and not collection. In words better than mine, when books are collected "as children gathering pebbles on the shore," it is almost certain that this collection has been done by one "deep versed in books, and shallow in himself."

It is a sobering thought that whilst it is improbable that any librarian will be the subject of a monument in bronze or stone, however unrecognisable, he is in the unique position, especially if he controls a reference library, of being the maker of his own permanent memorial—the book-stock. His successors in office, his staff, and their successors in office, will, from time to time, pay tribute to his memory or make such other observations as may be appropriate. That is the possibility, the opportunity, the challenge; and in meeting that challenge, in a well administered library, every one of us has a part to play.

(This address was delivered following the Annual General Meeting at Newcastle upon Tyne on May 16th, 1956).

Your Letters - Gold Coast libraries - small libraries - editor's follies

LOVE AND HATE

No doubt your attention has been called to the T.L.S. review of Blackstock's "Dewey Death." I quote: "Librarians seem to lead eventful lives, rich in love and hate in office time, and violent death appears quite natural in such a context."

What a vista this opens up. It might even reach A.A.L. Council, when we might have something like this:—

Jean Binder in the course of an impassioned appeal has just quoted: "Ah! Moon of my delight who know'st no Wane," when the Hon. Secretary pitches forward with a poisoned dart through his throat. An unidentified voice is heard to say, "It's a damned good shot," and Phillips rises to a Point of Order in that the Hon. Secretary has left the Council Chamber (for ever) without seeking permission of the President. The Hon. Editor, seeing future headlines hitherto undreamed of, moves Suspension of Standing Orders. Arthur Jones then moves suspension of the Hon. Editor and indicates a suitable girder. The Library School observers enthusiastically cheer these great moments, and Carver proposes that next Council be held at the Lyceum (to restore its former glory), with a Rock-'n'-Roll session led by Miss Willson and a suitable provincial divisional representative. McColvin and Enser realise that at last the A.A.L. is getting somewhere; the President spoils this by asking for details of destination. Such of the Council as could, rose shakily at 5.27 p.m.

O tempora! O mores!

A. LL. CARVER, *Portsmouth Public Library.*

WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE

Roy Flood, in his very readable review, *Success Story* (October issue), did not quite grasp the key to Evelyn Evans' remarkable achievement in building out of nothing a great library service in the Gold Coast.

In forcing that colony to telescope a century of normal library development into seven or eight breathless years, Miss Evans' principal weapon has not been so much her ability to cope with local fauna (the tropics are never as tropical as you might imagine and the number of her staff eaten by crocodiles has never been unreasonably large), floods and primitive transport as her faculty for managing people from august Permanent Secretaries to barefooted library cleaners.

At an early stage, she argued, bludgeoned, cajoled and battered a bewildered Secretariat into accepting her own passionate conviction that an efficient library system was essential to the vigorous development of the young colony. She convinced them that the plans she had in mind could not be carried out on a shoestring budget, and the result was that the Government's subvention to the Library Board was generous enough to make her schemes possible.

She used the same shock treatment on anyone capable of helping or hindering her plans for the library. Town councillors, controlling possible sites for libraries, native chiefs, chairmen, contractors and architects were all pressed into her army.

I think that the moral here is as applicable to English libraries as it is to those in under-developed countries. Professional knowledge alone is not enough in a chief librarian. It must be combined with a capacity for making friends and influencing people.

MATTHEW O. DOBSON, *Manchester Public Libraries.*

THE JUNIOR ASSISTANT

Mr. Kemp, in the November issue of the *Assistant*, prompts a number of points for discussion.

That "The junior assistant . . . is not an unimportant member of the staff" is an understatement. He is at present, to the public, often the *only*

dewey death -

staff training

contact with the library. Because of this his "natural" and "inquisitive" inclinations are necessary, but Mr. Kemp's last source of proficiency—"calculated inspiration"—cannot be assessed too highly.

Of course, the junior assistant will become dispirited and uninterested without proper encouragement. And unless his senior colleagues give him an assurance that he is not just a grade of glorified shop assistant the state of affairs will continue. Too often the "public" regard the library as merely another call, along with fetching the meat or ordering the groceries. "Three westerns and two romances" come as easily as "Three loaves and two pounds of potatoes." No wonder the junior takes on the aspect of a take-it-or-leave-it shopkeeper.

This attitude will, of course, continue, unless we give reasons for borrowers to think otherwise. We can, I submit, do this in two ways: (1) by a more sympathetic approach to junior staff training, and (2) by an incursion into public life of the senior—horror of horrors!—from his back office.

Which brings us to senior members of staff. I hear the cries of derision from the grey heads, the scorn of the chiefs. Us? Work at the counter? When is the work to be done?—work meaning usually estimates, accounts, committee meetings and cleaning material requisitions—things not remotely connected with public contact. Like the fact or not, many of our chiefs and deputies are quite remote from the brass tacks of librarianship. How many, I wonder, would not quail at the thought of spending an afternoon facing the crowd outside the sanctuary of their offices.

In this respect the senior should look to his guns. Is he as well trained as he likes to believe? Why not a proper emphasis in our library schools on actual dealings with the "public"? It is assumed that people leaving library school are able automatically to have a good "public approach." I find that this is not necessarily so. Not only does the assistant at the counter need to parry unintelligent remarks (of the "Orful weather innit?" type) with intelligent comment. He needs also an alert appreciation of readers' requirements. He needs to know when to offer help and when tactfully to leave the chap alone. He needs to be able to tell the new reader concisely and clearly where the books are, what to do with the joining form, how the reservation system

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works. He needs to give the diffident enquirer confidence instead of a cold glare. He needs, in short, to stimulate a little interest, with less of the cursory wave of the arm from behind the counter and a "You'll find the fiction over there and the seven hundreds round the corner" type of service.

MICHAEL R. HOWLEY, *Nottinghamshire County Library.*

I have read Ivor Kemp's article in the November *Assistant* with violent twinges of conscience and a general sense of strong agreement. But I do wish that he and other writers of articles would not strive so hard for vivid effect. It makes for uncomfortably hard reading.

JAMES D. YOUNG.

RESISTING THE ROT

My friend, the Editor, rightly accepts direction from no-one, but I should like to venture the observation (emboldened by my recent small success in curbing the worst excesses of the Honorary Secretary) that I have seldom read such inelegant, ill-mannered, tub-thumping, and sometimes blatantly vulgar journalistic twaddle as his not inconsiderable contribution to the November *Assistant*.

It is an honour to stand beside Mr. Benson Thorne in resisting the rot. His intervention has confirmed my impression that our even earlier predecessors must now be turning in their graves.

A. C. JONES, *Chiswick Public Library.*

We notice with concern that the *Assistant* is rapidly becoming a *Daily Mirror* of the library world. Only one serious article has appeared in it since Hay, the one on André Malraux.

We are sure that the *Assistant* can be both lively and have a sense of fun without showing the present degenerate tendencies.

KENNETH WHITTAKER, T. I. BELL, PETER SIDEBOTHAM, ANTHONY J. WOODS,
Manchester Public Libraries.

THE AUTHORITY VOTE

I would hate to live in a world of people who viewed their problems with the cold gaze of cod on a fishmonger's slab, but I would nevertheless like to see the L.A. Council's Memorandum on "The Public Library Service and Local Government Reorganization" and the events which followed in its train considered with a little more reason and a little less emotion.

The opposition to the proposals in the L.A. Council at the May 1955 meeting centred on four points which have never been answered, namely:—

(a) that the criterion chosen by which to deprive independent authorities of their library powers was a wrong one (viz., 1953-54 rateable value). There has been no precedent in England at least for hundreds of years for the granting to or withholding of powers from local authorities according to a means test of ability to pay for the service; on the contrary, untold millions of pounds have been made available from State funds to enable local authorities to discharge their functions and there is every sign that this policy (incidentally and incredibly recommended for libraries by the L.A. Council in this self-same Memorandum) will continue and even increase in magnitude;

(b) that there are good and bad county library systems just as there are good and bad municipal library systems, and any proposals which might involve the arbitrary transfer of library powers from a good authority to a bad authority was not feasible;

(c) that the proposals in the Memorandum would split the Association from top to bottom; and

(d) that for this and other reasons there was not the slightest chance that any government would adopt them.

Now each of these defects is of sufficient substance to be fatal of itself, but to have produced a proposal with four such fatal defects is no mean

achievement—and remember, all these faults were pointed out in the Council debate of May, 1955.

In the light of these considerations would it not be wise in the interests of unity just to let the matter lie where the Folkestone meeting left it? If the A.A.L. members want to die at the barricades, let it be for something a little less trivial, less unheroic, than this pathetic, bedraggled, discredited Means Test Memorandum.

W. S. HAUGH, *City Librarian, Bristol.*

I am by no means against the L.A.'s late proposals on local government organization, being one of those who made the journey to Folkestone in order to vote for the postal ballot and all that it entails. However, in fairness to the opposition, there were two arguments brought forward by them at the A.G.M. which are worthy of inclusion in your report.

Firstly, that though the Association's case was widely circulated to members, with the postal ballot, the case of the smaller authorities was not given; and secondly, that the L.A. proposals must now be largely superseded, or at least altered, by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government's White Paper on Local Government (Local Government: areas and status of local authorities in England and Wales, July, 1956. [Cmd. 9831]).

A. M. MORLEY, *Kent County Library.*

At the last meeting of this Guild we discussed your November editorial on institutional membership of the L.A., and came out in unanimous support of it. We also wondered whether there were any other professional bodies which were so overshadowed by the employers. At the time, nobody could think of one, and so far as I know nobody has done so yet.

Let us emulate the majority of professional bodies and have a professional association for professionals.

R. C. JONES, *Hon. Secretary, Camberwell Public Libraries Staff Guild.*

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A PROFESSIONAL OPINION

"Professional affairs should not be bedevilled by local politics and small-time politicians," says our Editor. Most librarians will agree. But the L.A. Annual General Meeting is a form where the views of all bodies interested in our library service can be expressed. We need to be able to distinguish between the views of one interested party and another. It has gone on record that the librarians of this country are opposed to the L.A. Council motion recommending minimum standards of service, yet this is not so. Surely in important matters of policy it should be possible for a secret ballot to be taken lest there be undue pressure on a librarian from his authority representative. The A.A.L. Secretary has pointed out that all librarians attend and vote at the A.G.M. in their own right. The professional vote and the institutional vote should be recorded separately. The combined vote might have the immediate effect of the profession being voted down but the considered opinion of librarians would be clear in matters of policy such as the case in point where we are trying to influence a government department.

Whether the professional vote should remain open to all personal members of the L.A. or be limited to members with some professional qualification is another matter to be decided. To restrict the vote might offset the authorities' criticism that voting by non-qualified members does not constitute the expression of a professional opinion, though such a restriction would undermine the principles of democracy.

Above all things, we librarians must establish our right to record a professional opinion on matters of policy at our A.G.M.

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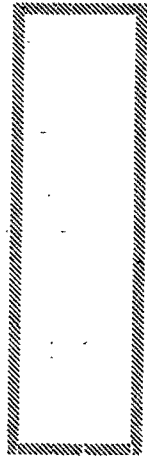
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VOL. 50 NO. 2

FEBRUARY, 1957

Talking Points

A Fairy Story.

We looked in the fiction section of the L.A.'s *Books for Young People, Group 1* to see what editions of Grimm's *Fairy Tales* were recommended. None were there. Hans Andersen was also missing. Eventually it was discovered that fairy tales had been lumped together in the "non-fiction" section. This seems to be another example of librarians confusing their public by wrapping themselves up in their own techniques. Imagine the reaction of a layman on being told that Grimm's tales are not stories. Intrigued now, we browsed further and discovered that *Tales from Chaucer* retold in prose by Eleanor Farjeon appeared under ENGLISH POETRY while the narrative prose of Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* appears at 822. No doubt cataloguing rules can be shown to justify these pretences, but it is suggested that common sense would put all these books into the fiction section of a children's library. The classifications here seem to be part of the pretentious sneering at fiction by many librarians who will go to great lengths to force anything of a literary flavour into the more "respectable" non-fiction classes.

In the Brighthouse Annual Report for 1954-5 there is the surprising statement about the Reference Library: "Rather less use was made of the library than in the previous year, but as the figures are only estimated, this need not be taken as a decline in the service." What if the figures had shown an upward trend; would the librarian then have pointed out that they need not be taken as an increase in the service? If no conclusion is to be drawn from statistics, estimated or not, what is the point of having them? Is there, in fact, any point in keeping the usual record of reference library "issues," often based on the number of books left lying around on the tables?

The Sussex Division of the A.A.L., although one of the smallest, continues to be one of the most active. Their latest enterprise is a scheme for temporary exchanges of staff between library authorities which has been approved by all chief librarians in the Division. Students who take advantage of the scheme will be able to gain most valuable experience in other libraries. It is hoped that other results will be a stimulation of professional interests and closer understanding between the libraries in the area. Latest news is that one library from outside the Division, Portsmouth, has also agreed to take part. Well done, Sussex—and a special mention for the hard work of the Divisional Secretary, J. H. Jones.

Mr. A. J. Wells, Editor of the B.N.B., takes in good part the poem on page 24. Such gaffs, he says, remain among the mysteries of life. On the question of classification, Mr. Wells explains that the bibliography of Oscar Wilde covers a range of subjects while that of Rupert Brooke is limited to poetry. Bibliographies of a subject go in 015, but bibliographies not limited to a particular subject and consisting of the works of an individual author go in 012. Those who wish to collect all the bibliographies of a person would first consult the index.

This is perhaps an appropriate place to pay tribute to the B.N.B.'s printed card service which, after some initial difficulties, seems to be providing a quick and cheap service. If only it can survive financially for a time, we shall all, in ten years, be wondering why we ever did our own cataloguing of British books—and why we were so long in accepting the idea of centralised cataloguing.

National Servicemen are reminded that during their service they may retain membership of the Library Association (and of the A.A.L.) by paying the specially reduced rate of 15s. 0d. a year. Married women who have temporarily left the profession may also take advantage of this rate.

Some of the wealth of material in Bristol Public Library is revealed in a printed catalogue of its holdings of books printed abroad in languages other than English during the years 1473 to 1700 (1956, 30s. post free). Indexes of printers and places of printing are useful additions to this list which comprises 935 works, 31 of which were printed in the fifteenth century. It supplements a catalogue published in 1954 of the early printed English books in the library.

From a student's essay: Incunabula is the Latin for swaddling clothes. It is the term applied to books printed before 1500 which were made of the material from which the name is derived.

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ASSISTANCE TO STAFF—I

Tony Shearman

The problem of assessing new reference books is not easy to solve. It is particularly difficult for junior library staff and those who are studying for Group B of the Registration Examination by correspondence course. The best substitute for actually working in a reference library is to spend an hour or two checking several similar books by some method given in one of the textbooks on assistance to readers (see footnote in *Intro. to Reference Books*—Roberts, p. 12); but to do this regularly, for example once a week, is not often possible and even a reference librarian may not be able to keep to such a routine. Some attempt to solve the problem is made in the Library Association Record which has an occasional column on reference work, but the kind of book dealt with (*The Pennsylvania Penthouse, 1639-1852: a select bibliography*) is frequently of little or no relevance to the majority of enquiries received in smaller reference libraries.

For these reasons I am going to "spotlight" one or several new reference books (published in the last three years and not in Winchell, Roberts, etc.) particularly indicating "hidden" material. Emphasis will be on books containing information most likely to be asked for in a small or medium sized library. If anyone who reads this is led to look at the reference book described, so much the better for them—they may pass the exam.; for those who don't, the odd fact may stick, in the odd way facts do and bring into use a reference book that would not otherwise have been opened. A book which cost five pounds is merely a fiver on the shelf until someone takes it down and gets the facts he wants from it.

It is astonishing how much time (and therefore money) can be spent in trying to find answers to queries from schoolboys and schoolgirls. Like the children, the query seems all innocence at first and you lead yourself into a more and more complicated search, becoming increasingly convinced that the information must be in some obvious place which is momentarily eluding you. It is like trying to swat a fly. Often the query has arisen from a dispute with another child or sometimes a teacher. Often, too, adults will ask a similar kind of question, prefaced with "We've been having a bit of an argument as to which of the . . ."

In 1955, a book was produced which may eventually scotch most of these questions from the start. Indeed the World's Press News quoted among the blurbs on the dust jacket goes so far as to say "No librarian will dare be without it." It is called *The Guinness Book of Records* (Guinness Superlatives Ltd., 2nd ed. 1956, 9s. 6d.). The preface describes the scope of the book as "a collection of facts—finite facts expressed in quantitative terms, predominantly those which by measurement are superlative or are records in their respective fields. The world's greatest man is, for this book, the man with the greatest girth rather than the man with the greatest intellect. The contents are as follows: 1—The Human Being; 2—The Animal Kingdom; 3—The Natural World; 4—The Universe; 5—The Scientific World; 6—The Human World; 7—The Business World; 8—The World's Structures; 9—The Mechanical World; 10—Accidents and Disasters; 11—Human Achievements; 12—Sport. There is a fairly good index: my favourite entry is ASSIZES, bloodiest. Staff in libraries, which already have the first edition, may be interested in some of the differences between the first and second edition: the index is two pages longer and now refers to illustrations by heavier type; and the contents arrangement has been unaccountably and completely shuffled around, perhaps in the name of "helpful order"? Also in the contents list, in the sports section, page number references to individual sports have been dropped.

The emphasis is on world and United Kingdom records. Incidentally did you know that it has been successfully established that the male wax moth can detect the smell of the female at a range of one mile? This is a record.

The compilers state in a letter that they are "very conscious that the book is not truly encyclopaedic," but they are limited for space and have to "give

preference to items that are not too abstruse." The space limitation is borne out by their treatment of HIGHEST POINTS, by Counties, in Great Britain. The first edition has the figures for England, Wales and Scotland. The second edition does not repeat those, giving instead, amendments (seven of them) and the figures for Northern Ireland and Eire. Thus for complete coverage on this point, it is necessary to have both editions. Under libraries, size is the only qualification. The oldest library might have been put in, after all the oldest school is there. And what about Luton's 7,000 issues in nine hours? The largest medical library is given: why not the largest law, social science or technical library? The earliest piano, gramophone record and pillar box can be found, but not the earliest lamp, magnet or thermos flask. However, the second edition has 74 pages more than the first, and future editions are likely to be progressively larger: have you seen early editions of Dewey? The compilers welcome comments and suggestions which will add to their information.

The earliest lamp, magnet and thermos flask, I found in *Things*, the third of four volumes called *People, Places, Things* edited by Geoffrey Grigson and C. H. Gibbs-Smith (Grosvenor Press, 42s. each vol., 1954). In one of the prefaces, the editors write: "Origins are fascinating, but it is surprising what we are not told about the most familiar objects, instruments or substances. So contributors have given a good many answers about things on which encyclopaedias are hesitant, vague—or silent." The disadvantage of these volumes as reference books is that the choice of "thing" is idiosyncratic, the contributors are not linked with their articles and the brevity of the articles (with the above-quoted as an exception) makes it preferable to use an encyclopaedia.

Incidentally, and in conclusion, the editors have an interesting if curious attitude to reference books: " 'People' is not a reference book or a biographical dictionary. The approach is less neutral." A reference book is many things, especially when it hasn't got what you want, but it is not neutral—unless it is lying fallow on the shelves.

* * *

THE FUTURE

Some irrelevancies provoked by reading "Looking Ahead: Techniques and Buildings of the Future" (London and Home Counties Branch of the Library Association, 1956, 7s. 6d.) and "The Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Scottish Library Association, 1955" (Scottish Library Association, 1955, 2s. 0d.).

By Geoffrey Smith

What will happen to us, the assistants, when the chief librarians' Utopia of photochargers, audiochargers, microfilm and microcard viewers, Telex and so on are part of everyday life in *our* libraries? First, of course, we shall be expected to know how to repair the machines (yes, even Wandsworth will have a breakdown one day) and the amateurism that seems so deeply rooted in librarians will thrive as we try to save our authorities the cost of expert advice. Think, for a moment, of Registration Examination papers that will demand working drawings of the various types of tape recorder . . . And operating these machines; after the first few weeks of novelty they'll be even more deadly dull than Browne! Sorting transaction cards for example—but, surely, by then someone will have sorted our duties out so that routine processes will be dealt with by non-professional staff, and we shall be able to do something to help readers—and *read* the books we are handling.

I wonder, will the idea of subject division of bookstock and staff have become accepted so that we deal with only a limited field of knowledge, and can apply the techniques of stock exploitation we learn and really get to know the stock we work with; or shall we still have to be

"jacks of all books" however large the library we work in happens to be?

What kind of books will be on the shelves of our libraries—westerns for the Chairman, thrillers for the Clerk, plenty of "easy" books to tempt the readers from their television sets? No, the library of tomorrow has a wider function in society than to be merely another agency for entertainment and unless we realise it, public support and prestige will be lost.

Library co-operation will still exist, but on a different principle. Every library—including County Branches—with an adequate collection of bibliographies to provide the essential key to the resources of the service, local schemes of co-operative book selection coupled with inter-availability of bookstock and readers' tickets. These could do much to improve library service in many areas and reduce the volume of work at Regional Bureaux—they might even become bibliographical centres, a much more useful function than propping up inefficient library services. Perhaps its too much to hope that England and Wales will follow the Scots in devising nationally agreed scales of contribution to co-operative schemes—one way to provide central book stacks and regional reference libraries.

Bookstacks in every library? Unless someone has awakened to the situation, each system will be trying to preserve all the books in its little part of the Regional Subject Specialisation scheme. As we pack the books in it will be pleasant to think of librarians in other Regions trying to pack just the same books into their crowded storage space.

What sort of buildings will "they" have planned for us to work in? Terrified readers caught in revolving doors, dwarfed by huge porticos or seeking the tiny entrance in a wall of stone? Vast buildings, with echoes, or libraries planned on a human scale, light, and decorated in warm colours, places where staff and readers don't feel buried in bricks and mortar? Branches—the fewer and bigger the better—sited, like the central libraries in shopping centres and not in those depressing "civic" areas where everything else has an institutional air. Libraries furnished so that books can be displayed—Dewey order a thing of the past in general libraries, and the way we now shelf books recognised as unattractive and unlikely to attract anyone but the persistent and expert searcher of the shelves.

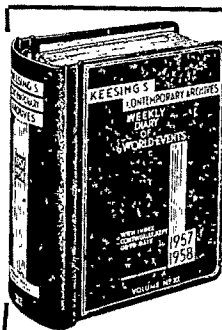
I wonder, will the chiefs sit in their offices and never meet the readers, will small systems federate with others to provide services outside their reach individually, will there be printed catalogue cards available before books are published? . . . But, wait a moment, the *future is ours*—it will be up to us what happens "then."

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Think for Yourself—Again

By W. Howard Phillips

Many middle-aged librarians will remember the "Classification Crisis" of the '30s. Then, despite all efforts of candidates and tutors, the examination results in classification contained fewer and fewer passes, especially in the theoretical paper. Eventually, almost in despair, a small band of A.A.L. tutors dared to suggest that perhaps the theoretical approach to the subject in the standard textbooks was misleading to the average student; that the mumbo-jumbo of badly presented, half understood philosophical-logical precepts was possibly not a sound basis upon which to formulate or to judge a book classification. Further, that the examiners, as *practical librarians*, might, after all, be more concerned to ascertain whether a candidate had been working intelligently in a classified library (or could do so) than to appreciate a parrot-like reproduction of certain sections of the professional manuals.

As a direct result of this "Think for yourself" movement, the theoretical side of the subject was reassessed; the textbooks were slowly but surely altered through successive editions, the various methods of study were revitalised, and the examination results steadily improved!

In this year of grace, 1957, the Registration candidate seems to be faced with a somewhat similar confusion. To-day, however, he is bemused, not so much by the mumbo-jumbo of the theory as by the hocus-pocus of the so-called "synthetic" application of the Dewey Decimal Classification. A.A.L. correspondence tutors are becoming increasingly concerned with the number of nonsensical Dewey notations being submitted in practical work by students preparing for the Registration examination. It is not certain whether this is the result of a misconception caused by the examiners' statement: "Classify as specifically as the schedules and tables used will permit", by the direct or indirect influence of methods advocated by some of the Library Schools (which, so I am told, have to be endured to be believed), or by the transmutation which the Decimal Classification has suffered at the hands of the B.N.B. classifiers. The fact remains that during the past few years, to my knowledge as tutor and Editor of the A.A.L. Classification Courses, there is increasing evidence of the flagrant misuse of the Dewey schedules by prospective candidates, all of whom have already spent considerable time on their studies, and many of whom have already taken the examination on at least one other occasion. The following examples are from a rapidly growing collection from students' work (the simple effective Dewey number is appended in brackets):—

The Lore of wishing wells in England and Wales.

551.493980942 (398.3)

Diplomacy of North and South America. 970.00013417 (327.7)

Influence of the Bible on European literature.

809.400001220 and 808.84000122052 (809.94)

History of scientific education in Sweden in the 19th century.

370.10909485 (507)

The Shoeing of horses.

636.1068531 (682.1)

Forms are being mixed with forms, subjects with subjects, and forms with subjects with complete abandon and at the personal whim of the classifier. Actually these and similar "abortions" (I quote the late Chairman of the D.C. Committee) seem to be based on a certain "Personality/Matter/Energy/Space/Time" formula which elevates the application of the scheme from the realms of Dewey's "economy and simplicity" far into the astral planes of Wellsian phantasy. In brief,

students are being encouraged to use the Decimal Classification as though it were the Colon Classification, unwisely grafting upon the older enumerative schedules the synthetic principle of sub-division.

Unfortunately, this approach, almost unknown before 1950, is becoming increasingly popular, making it more than ever difficult for the average assistant to appreciate that book classification is, above all, a method of arranging books on shelves and entries in catalogues in a convenient order.

I suggest, therefore, that the time has probably come when the approach to the subject should once again be reassessed—that another “Think for yourself” campaign may be both necessary and imperative. It must be recognised that practical book classification in the great majority of libraries throughout the world is not a sort of analysis by which every word of a title or aspect of a subject is automatically represented by notational symbols. It must surely be accepted that if any library finds it really necessary to classify its stock to the point where the *Municipal Year Book* is awarded the class number 325.04200058 (“to avoid confusion”!), then it is high time that some other scheme of classification were used, or that another classifier were appointed!

It is equally a matter of common sense to acknowledge that as each and every examiner is a *practical librarian*, he cannot fail candidates who submit accurate notations derived from the normal use of the Dewey schedules. If only to avoid pitfalls of their own making, students should assume that the examiners’ instruction regarding specific classification seeks, above all, to ensure that the most specific and convenient subject number in the printed schedules is advanced—e.g. a book on Horse shoeing should be placed at 682.1 and not at the more general head 682.

A moment’s thought should convince all candidates that they are much more likely to obtain a good pass mark by producing normal notations than by adopting complicated synthetic methods which may lead them, by accident or design, to produce nonsensical combinations foreign to the fundamental principles underlying the Dewey scheme.

The time has come when, in all fairness to the candidate, the examiners should state unequivocally that, in the Registration examination at least, subject numbers should not be “permuted” (with or without the 0, 00, 000, 0000) *unless specific instructions appear to that effect in the main schedules.*

A.A.L. CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

REVISION COURSES, MARCH—JUNE, 1957

A limited number of *Registration* and *Final* courses will be available for the session March—June. These short period courses are reserved exclusively for those students who have already sat the examination in the subjects required.

The closing date for application is *20th February*: it must be emphasised that after this date no application will be considered. Overseas students are ineligible.

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Application for First Professional, Registration, and Final courses beginning Spring, 1957, must be completed and returned by *28th February*. Full particulars of the courses offered are given in the current edition of the *Students’ Handbook* (L.A. 3s. 6d. plus 6d. postage).

FORMS, FEES AND ENQUIRIES

Applications for forms must be accompanied by stamped addressed envelopes and should be sent to the A.A.L. Hon. Education and Sales Officer, Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A., 49, Halstead Gardens, Winchmore Hill, London, N.21. The fee for each course is £2 10s. 0d., plus 10s. for students outside Europe.

En Garde, B.N.B.

By G. Dixon, Ipswich Public Library

It's happened! as I knew it must! I hadn't any doubt,
But I wondered whether I should live to see
The cataloguing gaffe that we are always warned about,
And perpetrated by the B.N.B.!

"St. Mary's Abbey, *York*," was what I hunted for, and hence
I started off by looking under S,
I was not at all surprised therefore when re-directed thence
To . . . "York. St. Mary's Abbey," How'd you guess?

I quickly turned the pages of the Cumulated thing,
My eager eye sought Y out like a hawk.
I found it, paused, and stared, transfixed, my head began to sing,
It stated "*See St. Mary's Abbey, York*."

Nor is this all (once started, I must criticize some more)
And just in case you should search on and on
For "*Candlelight in Avalon*" by Muir in '54,
It's indexed but class entry there is none!

One other thing that baffles me, I've tried and given up
To understand the difference between
The bibliogs, that lurk in B.N.B., at O-one-two,
And those that flaunt themselves in O-sixteen.

Perhaps I'm just a crazy mixed-up kid, or just plain dumb,
But I cannot see what Oscar Wilde has done,
That he should go at O-one-two while Rupert Brooke should come
At O-one-six-point-eight-two-one-nine-one.

Aha! thought I, perhaps it's "books about" at O-sixteen,
Whilst O-twelve takes "books by" (though whence precision?).
But further study has not yet enabled me to glean,
A sound characteristic of division.

Just one more moan; again in '54 I searched because
A Forestry Commission Guide I sought,
For Queen Elizabeth Forest Park, but the only entry was
For subject, which when looked up, came to nought.

There are points which I've not noticed, I am sure, and yet still more
Which escape me though my memory I prod,
But it's nice to know, and comforting when at the daily chore
That Mr. Wells, like Homer, can still nod.

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Information Please

By L. Greaves, Derby Public Library

The November issue of the *Assistant Librarian* provides considerable material for discussion, not the least being that which might be considered under the heading "Information." Mr. Watkins suggests that the appointment of a Public Relations Officer for the Library Association would achieve little until the animalistic standards of library service in this country have been, at least in part, rectified. Mr. Kemp calls for an informed library staff, while a few pages previously the question of an informed, i.e. educated, staff is considered. Reference to the dictionary produces the following definitions. To inform—to animate or give life to; to impart a quality to; to impart knowledge to. Information—intelligence given, knowledge. I would like to look a little more closely at these definitions and consider their implications with regard to librarianship, and especially in relation to three factors which have particular significance, viz. the public, the library authorities, the library staffs.

Public Relations

The first definition, to animate or give life to, is exactly the work of the P.R.O.s (I am visualising not simply one P.R.O., but a group of them up and down the country). It is the public who need this animation and the colossal task should be started as soon as possible. To await the rectification of even the more glaring anomalies of the library service in the country is to wait too long. Animation must start somewhere, and although I fully realise that publicity for a service which we cannot give would be grossly unfair to the public and would achieve not support, but hostility, I do consider that the potentialities of a good library service (as achieved in our more advanced systems) should be placed before the public in order that they may realise our present limitations, and the fact that we recognise these limitations ourselves while striving to better our service. It is not inconceivable that the public could sway the library authorities by their demands for the realisation of our ideals, and it is our P.R.O.s who must stimulate the public to make these demands. It can only be by repeated publicity at all levels that we can hope to achieve success, in other words by following the methods of business advertising. The use of the Press on both national and local levels would ensure that at least the majority of the public would have the opportunity to discover a wider conception of our service while at the same time solving one of our most urgent problems, that of reaching the non-library-user. At the other end of the scale the merest junior must be aware of the many people who disclaim knowledge of our service and express an almost pathetic delight when introduced to even the most mediocre service.

At the same time we obviously cannot wait for the animation of the public to stir the local authorities into a realisation of the potentialities and importance of their library service. Our P.R.O.s must attempt the task of converting unsympathetic authorities. Although the library service is financially a non-profit making service, it does, in this age of the neurosis, provide a service not uncomplementary to that of the National Health Service. We know all too well the scoffers who object to the purveying of light fiction, but it would be interesting to find out just how influential this reading matter is in providing an antidote to the complexities of our society. The more concrete achievement, that of providing educational matter of all types cannot be over-stressed. To pursue

the definitions given above we must impart a quality to our library authorities. If we must be literal and stick to one quality only, then it should be that of progression. How much better to impart not one but several qualities which are so obviously desirable.

The Ignorance of Librarians

From the library authorities let us now turn to ourselves, the staff. An informed staff providing information. That surely is one of the highest aims of librarianship. Mr. Kemp calls for a staff informed in the policy of their own specific system. On the other hand, the staff must be informed in the sense of being educated particularly with regard to general knowledge. It is with appalling regularity that members of staff, usually but not always junior staff, reveal ignorance of knowledge of a purely general nature. This emphasises that there must be no lowering of standards if we are to retain, or rather improve, our standing both with the public and the library authorities. The practice of taking fewer subjects in the General Certificate of Education is in itself a bad thing in that the assistant should possess as wide a knowledge as possible. It is not altogether false to say that the assistant studying for professional examinations has little time in which to acquire the width of knowledge and experience which is so desirable when serving the great diversity of needs expressed by the public, and thus as much general knowledge as possible is essential before commencing such study.

The definitions with which I commenced are worthy of greater consideration and amplification than I have given them, and the problems presented in their amplification, while undoubtedly great, merit a more optimistic and determined approach than they are at present receiving.

Manning the Mobiles

In October we printed an appeal by Howard Hoptrough for more articles about their work from mobile librarians. The response has been meagre, but we hope others will be encouraged to write by this contribution from

Miss Jo Eldridge and R. M. Lyle

We dip our headlights to Mr. Hoptrough for drawing attention to us outdoor workers.

His call for statistics can probably be answered from the library schools as students doing practical work are gluttons for figures, and at North-Western Polytechnic, at least, they are carefully filed away. However, we enclose some from Leicestershire.

In this county we have four full-time travelling libraries displaying some 2,000 volumes, and one part-time van, all operating from headquarters. Rounds are fortnightly and occur in the day-time; issue is the "family" adaption of Brown. Two fiction and two non-fiction books are allowed to each reader, but this is difficult to enforce since families tend to fluctuate according to the needs of the reading members, there usually being one member at hand to change the books, meaning that personal choice is exercised by only 25 per cent. of the readers. This is aggravated when that person chooses for other families. Evening visits, when men and school-children are at home seems the obvious answer, but will we find the drivers to do it?

At holiday times, when the van doesn't call, readers are allowed extra books for the four-week period, but the extra stock required so that readers visited late in the day have adequate choice is difficult to carry, and when it is returned it is chaos—there is no spare shelving on

a van. Has anyone found a solution, please?

Each van is staffed by a librarian/driver who is responsible for driving the van; the selection of the stock from H.Q. pool; translating request lists; filing stock/catalogue cards; writing overdue; repairs and withdrawals; display, keeping the inside of the van clean; and, of course, assistance to readers. Most roads in the country are good, and the large vans are restricted to 20 m.p.h. We pay our own speeding fines!

Close and regular contact with each family makes readers' needs easier to recognise and define, and it is the job of the professional librarian to ensure that these needs are met, but is it necessary to have a qualified assistant on each van, or sufficient for one qualified assistant to have close supervision over several? It is clearly non-professional to dig one's van out of snow-drifts, but we enjoy the life; however, we agree that the lack of opportunity to attend meetings and classes is a serious draw-back; and, as at all small service points, there is no experience in cataloguing, classification, use of reference books, staff-management, etc. It is therefore expected that van assistants, appointed as such, remain for only short periods before moving on to posts offering a wider variety of professional tasks.

LEICESTERSHIRE TRAVELLING LIBRARIES: STATISTICS, 1955-6

Population served by travelling libraries:	(About 58,000).
Population of villages served:	Under 2,000—this is the yardstick, but there are exceptions, some larger villages have the van service, some smaller have library centres.
No. of stopping places:	While <i>one</i> is aimed at, many communities prefer to split up the time into 3—6 stops.
No. of vans:	Four full-time and one display van half-time for very small communities. 1 x Morris 3-ton chassis. 3 x Bedford 3-ton chassis. 1 x Austin 30-cwt. chassis (display van).
Stock on full time vans on display:	2,000
Issues: 1955/6	1, 119,760 2, 114,695 3, 95,849 4, 51,110. Commenced Sept., 1955. 5, 45,728. Half-time.
Staff:	One librarian/driver per van.
Grading of staff:	Qualified librarians: APT. I. Unqualified librarians: Miscellaneous IV.
Period of visits:	Fortnightly.
No. of days operated:	Full-time: 9 days per fortnight. Part-time: 5 days per fortnight.
Issue method:	Family system: i.e. Brown adapted. One reader's ticket per family. Each village filed separately, and alphabetically by family within the village.
Books per reader:	Two fiction and two non-fiction.
Fines:	None.

In Defence of the Junior

By Les Everard

Hampshire County Library

Apathy

From time to time we read of the apathy of younger library assistants. I have been present at local divisional meetings of the L.A. and A.A.L. at which, although there has been a fair sprinkling of juniors, there have been no contributions from them. Is this so surprising? How many older librarians were forthcoming at the same age? Isn't the fact that they are there, often at considerable expense, proof of their interest and willingness to learn from their seniors?

The difficulty juniors experience in expressing themselves is all too often misconstrued as apathy. One cannot blame them for being diffident of advancing their immature views in the presence of their seniors—of dropping bricks and having to face the pious platitudes of their chiefs the next day. By the same token one cannot expect a junior to rush into print with a contribution that is critical of conditions which even approximate to those of his own system.

Having seen a few of the more precocious members of the younger generation, with beetling brows, boils and baleful glares who insist on being vocal *and* rude, my sympathy is with the silent ones. Their silence does not denote lack of interest: it is just as natural for the sensitive, gauche adolescent to shun the limelight as it is for him to detest the post-mortems still inflicted on him by some chiefs after examinations.

Even amongst the older generation not all the raised voices and print-happy fingers belong in the highest flight of practising librarians.

Welfare

Closely allied to the need to understand—and to remember is to understand—the junior's reluctance to express himself, is the necessity to identify oneself with his outlook to his profession, especially his working conditions.

It should not have been necessary to promulgate the majority of the findings in the Tighe Report; they should have been incorporated in the working conditions of all library staffs long ago. To take but one aspect of the problem, how many library staffs still have to work old-fashioned time-tables with "splits," never varying late Saturday shifts and that latter-day horror, the over consolidated time-table with three or four long days?

It is no answer to say that they prefer it, even if they have been consulted. How many juniors faced by an elderly, imposing chief would disagree with his findings? In retrospect many of us may have wished we had had the temerity to say "I think it's lousy, I could do better myself"—but only in retrospect! All too often the attitude of the chief, albeit unexpressed, seems to be "sweat it out, I had to do it."

I feel that the fairest way is to offer the staff a choice of two or more time-tables and choose the most popular.

Recruitment

The difficulty now being experienced in recruiting junior staff is, of course, largely tied up with the unattractive working hours and its concomitant factor, insufficient reward for those hours.

I feel that the former is the more important factor and, since the librarian's time-table can never compare with ordinary office hours, it is vital to provide the best we can to attract the kind of young people we need.

The chief who requires his juniors to work several full days in the counter or a late stint every Saturday and complains of the difficulty in filling junior posts, should be sentenced to six months hard labour at the local employment exchange—enticing recruits into the profession!

Before the war when shops were open till 7 and 8 p.m., there was a valid reason for late closure. To-day, when one is lucky to find a shop open after 5.30 p.m., surely no lending library should be open after 7 p.m., with the possible exception of those in large areas of population where considerable travelling is involved?

We all know that we should have some people in the library even if we were open till 10 p.m., if only the old tramp who has come in for a warm, or the young couple furtively holding hands and looking at the voters' list upside down, but this is no reason for keeping the library open. The library assistant should share in the general amelioration of working conditions obtaining to-day.

Whilst the service to the public must always be paramount, since the war librarians have been falling over backwards to prostrate themselves at the feet of the public, often to provide some footing "service" that has been advocated in the latest text-book or journal, but in which the readers are not in the least interested.

To illustrate one facet of this subservience—not to the public so much as to the library theorists' idea of what the public want—let us consider the readers' adviser.

How galling it is for an assistant to be besieged by queues of borrowers whilst Miss Blank, often the self-appointed "passenger" on the staff, is waiting at the enquiry desk for the important work her chief has given her. The vague, old gentleman is quite naturally intimidated by the formality of it all and would much rather ask "that pleasant young girl in the counter." The extra hands are withheld from the counter; (I'm the readers' adviser!), and the chance for all the staff to share in the good old-fashioned floor service is gone. It might suit the American temperament, but do we have to accept it?

Perhaps the greatest difficulty experienced to-day in recruitment is in attracting young men into librarianship. I feel that, salaries and time-tables apart, the greatest deterrent is a lad's inability to follow or take part in his favourite sport.

It may well be that too much emphasis is placed on sport these days, but this charge could certainly not be laid at the door of librarians. Whilst the necessity for covering the Saturday afternoon shift may preclude a young man's frequent participation, he should be encouraged by regular half-days and generous splits on his late evenings. His colleagues will usually prefer to work a 1—7 shift, thus covering the afternoon.

The gibe that the library profession is composed 100 per cent. of women; 75 per cent female and 25 per cent male seems to contain a certain amount of validity these days. The mere mention of sport finds many librarians clutching wildly at the counter. Like male nurses, we shall soon be speaking of male librarians as an apparent contradiction in terms. Let us have more virility in the males we have and the young men will be encouraged to join us.

Above all, let us remember that the staff are part of the public and accord them a little of the attention we lavish on the readers.

Your Letters

— censorship

Keeping Birmingham Pure

Christmas Eve is perhaps no time for a consideration of the ethics of public librarianship, but anyone who read *The Times* on 24th December must have been relieved of any doubts he might have had about the necessity for the *Assistant Librarian's* recent censorship number. Here we have a great public library system (Birmingham) revising its French stock, and ordering through a well-known bookseller (Blackwell) the complete works of an author of some importance (Jean Genet). The books are impounded by the Customs, and the sorry tale is told to a *Times* correspondent by Mr. V. H. Woods, the City Librarian.

Now you may hold any of a number of possible views about the literary and moral worth of M. Genet's works, and perhaps the Customs are labouring to preserve Birmingham from a foul continental contagion, but one would have thought that Midland culture was tough enough to withstand it. Anyhow, Mr. Woods, after citing critical opinions of Genet, is quoted as saying: "We therefore felt that the work should be included in our collection."

There is a sting in the tail of this story, however. Mr. Woods goes on (I quote *The Times*): "My view is that censorship should be exercised by the Government, and if they take the view that the books are unsuitable, I shall not regard it as my duty to press for their return." This is alarming—does it not imply that a librarian, having decided from his professional knowledge that a library needs a certain book, must quietly accept the decisions of a Government censorship which offers no explanation for its rulings, and amend his book-selection accordingly? Surely we have seen too much in the last decade to believe that the solution to such problems is to pass them on to an all-powerful "Government"?

Possibly Mr. Woods meant that censorship, if needed, should be carried on only by the central government, which can be called upon, one hopes, to justify its actions. This might be reasonable, for, as *The Times* said in an editorial, "the number of potential censors—or those who act for the real censors whoever they may be—is legion . . . the only answer is the constant challenging of each disputable exercise of censorship." There is a right of appeal in this case, and not the least curious feature is that some, at least, of Genet's works have been acquired by British libraries.

Birmingham Public Libraries Committee are to consider the matter, but, whatever the result of their deliberations, the case should make it clear to any librarian who may still be uncertain, that censorship is a real enough issue, here and now.

A. C. BUBB, *National Central Library.*

The Sins of Puritans

Mr. Broom surely misses the point. "If," he asks, "a man is addicted to the novels of James Hadley Chase or George Viereck, why should he not have his fill of them?" No reason at all, but *ought ratepayers to provide them for him free of charge?* That is the question; and it is a question not of censorship, but of book selection. A librarian incapable of differentiating between *No Orchids* for Miss Blandish and Rabelais is merely confessing his incompetence as a selector of books.

J. T. GILLETT, *Borough Librarian, Willesden.*

Censorship in Sittingbourne

After your really excellent number on censorship (the *Assistant* gets better each month!) you may be interested in the following from the *Chatham, Rochester and Gillingham News*:—

"Copies of *Soviet News* have been banned from Sittingbourne and Milton Urban Council's library . . . in view of Russian action in Hungary."

ALAN MORLEY, *Kent County Library.*

Your Letters —*L.A. membership* —*underpaid posts*

REFORM THE L.A.

Institutional membership must indeed go; librarianship will not be generally regarded as a profession until we have a truly professional association. Abuse of authority members, however, reveals our immaturity and only harms the cause; we need the goodwill of these people.

Other reforms are necessary. Full membership for chartered librarians only? Yes, for it is high time that Fellowship and Associateship meant something *within* the L.A. As things are, the newest member has the same rights as the oldest Fellow; "A.L.A." and "F.L.A." are but indications of merit and "Certificated Librarian" (1st or 2nd class) would be a more apposite description. I suggest renaming the F.P.E. and Registration, Intermediate and Final respectively, and awarding the Fellowship for service to the Association over a number of years or on the attainment of a certain position in the profession. It seems reasonable to me also, that Fellows should have some measure of control over the affairs of the L.A. and should pay a higher subscription.

R. F. ATKINS, *Tottenham Public Libraries.*

WHO'S RATting?

The *Assistant Librarian* was, not so long ago, comfortably moribund. Recently it has taken to spitting and abusing, so that one must conclude it has recovered. The attitude appears to be a mixture of "enfant terribleism" and "What shall we take a whack at *this* month—?"

Currently, rather too many whacks are being taken at colleagues who accept posts at inadequate salaries. Are we all so blameless? And there *are* other crimes. Far too many of our ambitious young men are playing at General Post in a desperate bid to achieve a chiefship as soon as possible—any eminence, however "grise," provided it is well paid, by forty or at the latest forty-five. Is there not a hint of "ratting" there?

T. M. ROGERS, *St. Marylebone Public Library.*

The statements made by Mr. Baguley and Mr. O'Rourke on applying for underpaid posts in the November issue must not be allowed to go unchallenged. Their own particular brand of "sob story" is one which is to be heartily deplored.

Mr. Baguley in particular appears to classify librarians into two groups. On the one hand he seems to say, there are the librarians whose circumstances are such that they can afford to ignore posts inadequately graded. On the other hand there are those whose domestic circumstances are such as to absolve them from all shadow of sin when preparing to disregard their Association's best endeavours on their miserable behalf.

What Mr. Baguley forgets is that the second group fall into two distinct categories. There are those who are prepared to sacrifice the chance of obtaining a much-coveted post no matter how straitened their personal circumstances might be in order to support their Association in its fight for improved conditions. They are the people who put professional unity before self. The second category within this division are the ones who take advantage of the self-denial and moral scruples of their colleagues to achieve personal advancement, whilst keeping in reserve a touching little story of hungry mouths and frowning Bank Managers. These are the people who put self first, last—and always. May they rest uneasy in their nasty little jobs with the thought always with them that they would never have reached their present eminence without forfeiting something they can never regain, the esteem of their colleagues.

D. E. DAVINSON, *Warrington Municipal Library.*

Your Letters

—the L.A. proposals
—sharing ideas
—routine at Norwich

The Future of Small Libraries

In our last issue, Mr. Haugh, City Librarian of Bristol, attacked the L.A.'s proposals for abolishing the independence of very small libraries

The criterion for exercising independent library powers could be either population or financial ability to provide a minimum standard of service. Mr. McColvin's Report has established that effective service (particularly in book provision) is most closely allied to expenditure. If population is used as criterion, the authority could clearly give an appalling service whilst retaining its independence. Rateable value, or better, actual expenditure on libraries still needs to be handled with caution, but the caution would be most necessary at the top of the expenditure table, not at the bottom. Financial ability has certainly been found to be the better in other countries.

There is nothing incredible in the Library Association Council's recommendation that Government grants should be available for adequate library authorities, whilst retaining the financial ability criterion: no authority is spending half the amount it ought to do. And further it seems almost certain that the Government would not consider grants for authorities as small as most of those under consideration; grants are given to larger units (e.g. Education). Mr. McColvin, L.A.R., August, 1955, adequately refutes the "good and bad county library systems" argument. But I would further urge that the alternative, of amalgamation with other authorities, municipal or county, has been too much lost sight of; this may well be the more important and useful of the two, and further disposes of Mr. Haugh's objection.

I agree with Mr. Morley that the proposals have been badly advertised both before and after the Southport Conference; we ought in any case to have had an inquiry into the relative efficiency of large and small authorities long ago. But the publication of the Government White Paper, 1956, in no way means that the proposals need be dropped. The Government will not, by the timid note of this Paper, be in any hurry to bring in Local Government reform. The smallest authorities could certainly be amalgamated straight away. And we must remember that after Local Government reforms have been agreed upon, a stand-still of about 20 years will elapse before they take effect. We must hope that Public Libraries will be in much better shape by the 1980's than they are now.

That the question should be dropped, or that it is trivial or pathetic, is unthinkable, and it is saddening to find a man such as Mr. Haugh suggesting it. As is shown by the reports from Camberwell and Manchester, there is a steadily increasing, and already a majority, view that progress along the lines of the Memorandum, coupled with staff division, would be the most important steps in public librarianship for a long time past and to come.

B. M. CHARLTON, *Lancashire County Library.*

RESTRICTIVE PRACTICE ?

The following extract from a report in the *Eastern Evening News* on the use of photographic charging at Norwich, demonstrates once again, that librarians too often consider that the principle of convenience to the reader should be subordinated to that of smooth working of the administrative machine, rather than the reverse.

"One abuse which has been brought to notice . . . is the practice of some readers of repeatedly renewing books by post or telephone, and thereby retaining them for several months . . ."

"Under the new issue system it is necessary to recover periodically the small white cards which are now placed in the books, so that they can be

used again. Not more than two renewals are now granted by post or telephone. However, if the book itself is returned when a third request for renewal is made, this is not normally refused if no one has requested the book."

PHILIP M. WHITEMAN, *Assistant Lecturer, Leeds School of Librarianship.*

Any Ideas?

The projects and schemes of the librarian-experimenters that shatter our faith in things like Brown(e), the ubiquitous bookcard, libraries with fixed walls and card catalogues are duly recorded in the solemn pages of the L.A. Record for all to tear to pieces or adapt to their own needs.

But what of the minor innovations, the bright ideas that some assistant has to help readers or cut down tedious routine for the library staff? Unless someone happens to pay a visit to the library in question a good idea may go unreported and therefore unnoticed by other libraries that might benefit.

Could not a regular feature be started in the *Assistant* reporting ideas that might be useful to some libraries—a sort of postal suggestions box or the librarian's equivalent of "Household Hints"? Examples:

- (1) Use the B.N.B. weekly parts as the accessions register for all books within its scope and, if the issue records are arranged numerically, use the B.N.B. number for charging purposes.
- (2) During the holiday season arrange a display of your most suitable pocket size books linked with a list of libraries where any readers' tickets will be accepted (as published recently in the L.A. Record).
- (3) If you have a classified card catalogue, build in sets of drawers at one end of each block of shelves to hold the catalogue cards for the appropriate subject represented on those shelves.

R. H. MILLWARD, *Croydon Public Library.*

Such contributions would be very welcome. A few sentences on a postcard are often sufficient to share worth-while ideas with other librarians.—HON. EDITOR.

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GEORGE TAYLOR,
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Whodunnit?

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The old advertisement gimmick that, if a thing is said often enough, it will become true has a considerable bearing upon the Marlowe versus Shakespeare controversy. Conditioned by three centuries of passive acceptance of Shakespeare's authorship of these plays, by three hundred years' reiteration of "Shakespeare's plays," the popular mind has absorbed this "truth." Consequently, it was with amused contempt, tinged with some derision, that most of us heard of the attempt by some American crank/scholar to prove, at least to his own satisfaction, that the plays of Shakespeare were indeed written by Christopher Marlowe.

To draw a sentence or phrase from one author, and to set it up beside a phrase clothing a similar idea in like phraseology by another, and, from a comparison of both, to arrive at the conclusion that both must have been written by the same hand, is a display, on its face value at least, of simplicity, and, at the worst, of literary charlatanism. From what was at first a diversion from his real literary studies, an American scholar derived considerable amusement from comparing passages from one playwright whom we know as Shakespeare with those of another—Christopher Marlowe. Having amassed a great number of such parallelisms, and meanwhile thinking that there might be a connection between the murder of Marlowe in 1593 and the emergence a few months later of an unknown "Shakespeare," what had been at first simply a harmless diversion became for this scholar, Calvin Hoffman, a life-long task—an attempt to prove that the name "Shakespeare" was used by Marlowe as a blind for his real identity.

Briefly the facts of Marlowe's life are these. Educated at Cambridge, M.A., B.A., spy of Sir Francis Walsingham, noted playwright, homosexualist, atheist. A warrant for his arrest was issued on a charge of heresy, the outcome of which would have been death at the stake. Sir Thomas Walsingham, Marlowe's lover, cousin of the all-powerful Sir Francis, was a man of considerable power himself, and, to ensure Marlowe's safety, devises the following plan. Marlowe will be "murdered." Three of Marlowe's own spy colleagues are chosen for this task and a man is murdered at an inn in Deptford: Deptford being chosen, since, the Queen then in residence at Greenwich, jurisdiction within a radius of twelve miles of the monarch is suspended, in the event of a crime. The Queen's coroner, Danby, is a great friend of Sir Thomas, and within thirty hours an inquest is called, a jury summoned, Danby installed, and judgement passed on a body identified as Marlowe's. Marlowe is now officially "dead," and the warrant for his arrest, so long as he remains "dead," is nullified. By this time, however, Marlowe is living on the Continent, where he continues to write. In England, Walsingham, taking all the necessary precautions, has the mss. copied by a scrivener; before passing them to the printers for publication. (It was the original Marlowe mss. that Hoffman hoped to discover, when the Walsingham vaults were opened some months ago). An unknown actor, William Shakespeare, is chosen as a blind. When a folio edition of the work was published in 1623, two of Shakespeare's actor friends were called to lend authenticity. Ben Jonson is hired to write a paid elegy. And the secret remained a secret. As those intimate with it died,

their secret died with them. After the murder at the inn, the remainder of the life is the hypothetical reconstruction of Hoffman.

This reconstruction of Marlowe's last days is certainly ingenious and goes a long way towards explaining the enigma of the famous sonnets. Whatever one's view of Hoffman's claim, however, all of his suppositions are backed with considerable argument and facts. But of William Shakespeare, little is known, except that he was born in 1564, was married, and was a father of three children in 1585. He accumulated considerable wealth and died in 1616, with no mention of his death from contemporary sources. Walsingham chose his blind well; the rôle of authorship which Shakespeare assumed fitted him perfectly, since his existence is not sufficiently well-documented to have it disproved. It has been this very lack of reaction among his contemporaries, his "anonymity" almost, as it were, which has aroused the suspicion of many regarding the authorship of these plays. These blanks in Shakespeare's life have always puzzled scholars and biographers, and it is only because they consider the legitimacy of the claim as axiomatic, that they have not questioned it. Realising this, one of the favourite weapons of Hoffman is to take the opinions and judgement of these other scholars and use them to bolster up his own case, showing how only an ingrained conventional acceptance of Shakespeare keeps them from the truth. In 1933, J. M. Robertson, the Shakespearean scholar, after a detailed comparison of Edward II and Richard II, wrote that, if Shakespeare's claim to authorship were pressed, he was nothing less than a "fumbling plagiarist," in view of the stunning similarities between both plays. All this despite the fact that "Richard II" was written after Marlowe's "death" in 1593. Therefore, until Hoffman's recent suggestion as to the real circumstances of the case, anyone who did believe that Marlowe had a hand in its composition was compelled to put back the generally accepted date to about 1592.

Unless conclusive proof is found, however, these theories will only find a limited currency among a few people, and yet another group will be formed, one more to set beside the Baconians, the Oxfordians, etc.,—the Marlovians.

A Librarian's Microcosmography

after John Earle

by Margaret Cook, *Ealing Library School*

A Junior Assistant is the dim library's fresh picture newly drawn in oils, which time and much handling dims and defaces. She arrives at her task not a minute too soon and leaves not a minute late. She constantly combs her hair and replenishes the redness of her lips and enters the lending department smiling forcefully; ready for the attack which is daily made upon her by the borrowers. She stands defiant behind the counter, her swift red-tipped fingers dipping ever into the issue. At her first free moment she catches the ladder in her stocking, at her second she begins to file away the new charges.

With every care she makes the tea, tending to her cups with queenly pride, for this task she feels her true responsibility, free from all supervision for in this, and this only, are her seniors ignorant of her every action.

Routine may be the only true word to describe her duties, yet she is happy enough, always with a smile and an item of news, concerning her clothes usually, for her companions. Her only discontent is the preferential treatment, seemingly always imposed upon neighbours. Sweets

are her only weakness, yet in all her contentment, only the word "examinations" causes a black shadow to cross her mind. However, that pearl, the junior assistant, is invariably lost from behind her counter by her succumbing to the tortures of these very things, or else the appearance of a ring: whichever may be her fate, she is a short-lived creature, ever fading and reappearing in new form.

A Senior Assistant scorns and fears, and yet hopes for F.L.A., but dare not imagine it with the wrinkles of age. His face, still young, has assumed not naturally, a harassed expression. Whether this is caused by late studying or proud responsibility it is hard to tell. With conscientiousness he allots the tasks, and he himself takes too many to ensure that all is done. His one desire is praise from his seniors and awe from his juniors, and consequently his manner quite alters from aloofness to humbleness in the presence of each. The sole interest he has in books is found in the staff library, where literature he pours over everlastingly. He becomes increasingly more difficult to please as the date of his examination draws nearer.

A Deputy Librarian is one who knows the burden of her calling and has studied to make her shoulders sufficient. She is known by her awed public and feared by her staff, though they occasionally see through her snaps and rebukes her own cares and hardships. In difficulty she hastens to her staff's aid, but if she finds an error, woe betide the culprit. She never makes an error.

Her seeming aim is to lift all burdens from her chief, and from him all trifling crises. Yet the smallest crisis is, to her, a terrible calamity: a crossed ticket will cause her to fly in terror to the "queries file," while a book temporarily lost will cause still more conflict. Her juniors learn quickly to avoid her at these times.

Years among books and cataloguing cards tell truly on her appearance. The bright colours worn in her youth have turned firmly to dull browns and austere greys, while the heels of her shoes have gradually lowered throughout her years to a nothingness. Yet while she has dulled, her desk has brightened, for while once it was littered with papers and books pending attention, now it shines bright with a few neat files, but mostly empty, all but a bright vase of flowers and a shining brass calendar where all memorandums are kept. No one may lay so much as a ticket on this most hallowed place.

She seems a permanent fixture to the library and no one remembers when she was not there.

A Chief Librarian is the central pillar around which all his library revolves, and he believes that he is so destined to fame that all the world will revolve with it. His fame, however, has not yet reached him. His office is as a temple, the deputy his priestess, and though it has an open door to all visitors (except travellers, to whom he is permanently "out"), to the staff it is an impassable barrier to sacred ground.

His ideas are never accepted happily and he has much opposition, yet still he perseveres. He is as proud of his kingdom as a child is with his first great possession, and often he brings his fellow librarians to show them the wonders of the world.

As a general rule he cloisters not his meditations in the narrow darkness of his library, but sends them abroad in the outer world, where he is better known than inside his own small place of work. But there are times when this is not so: when the library is overcast with a great shadow and gloom, and no member of the staff dare speak in his presence,

at the time of the submitting of the annual estimate, or to a lesser degree, the approach of a committee meeting.

We can call him no great author, yet he writes very much, but he is no finer man than he thinks, though no one can deny that he is a fine man in his way.

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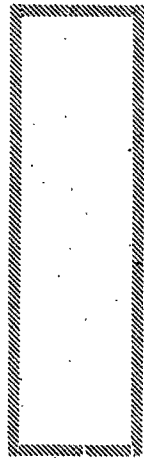
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(Section of the Library Association)

EDITOR: W. G. SMITH.

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VOL. 50 NO. 3

MARCH, 1957

Talking Points

"The libraries are simply crying out for reform in their public relations, and now is the time for them to break away from their ultra-conservative methods. After all, what kind of business is it that simply *waits* for a customer to call, lets him choose his own book, and merely tells him when it is due back? The service is most efficient, and *so* courteous, of course, but where is the dash, the energy, the going out into the highways and byways to drag in the customers?" The quotation is from the magazine of the Coventry branch of NALGO and was written by a non-librarian. It was sent me by Miss Sheila Apted, of Coventry Public Library, who, as Branch Assistant Public Relations Officer, is another librarian whose good work for NALGO is helping to increase the prestige of librarians with other local government officers.

"Too much attention is paid in public libraries to local history collections. A few dithering old people and antiquarian societies claim an unfair proportion of the libraries' time and money." This view was expressed recently by a reference librarian. It is certainly true that some librarians embark on local history tasks such as minute indexing of the collection without realising how time-consuming it is and without first demanding the necessary extra staff. As a result the general work of the library suffers.

Censorship at the British Museum. There is an interesting account in *My Life and Crimes* by Reginald Reynolds (Jarrolds, 1956) of a procedure at the British Museum Reading Room. "All the more blatantly pornographic books in the Reading Room . . . are known as *Cupboard* books. If the press-mark of any book begins with CUP you know that you will not obtain that book merely by filling in one of the usual forms. You will be asked to explain to one of the higher staff just why you want to read it." Mr. C. A. Toase, who drew our attention to this says that he did not believe it until he checked the B.M.'s Subject Index and found the CUP pressmark. Perhaps, he adds, booksellers would find it profitable to mark such books in their catalogues "BM pressmark CUP."

Are Librarians Human? Doubts are sometimes expressed, but anyone attending the A.A.L. week-end conferences finds us both anxious to enjoy ourselves and to discuss our work seriously. It should be emphasised that all discussions are informal and no-one need be in fear of being overwhelmed by his seniors. A new departure in this year's entertainment is a performance by the Winchester Jazz Men. Total cost of the week-end is only £3. In recent years the Manchester Staff Guild has helped junior members to attend by paying some of their expenses. Perhaps other staff guilds will consider doing the same this year.

For further details, see the advertisement on page 44.

Your Letters

Editorial Policy — More Censorship
— Registration Age Limit — Sharing Ideas
— Norwich

Our Tone

Your Manchester correspondents who objected in the January issue to the present tone of the *Assistant* remind me of persons such as Mr. Alan Thomas (censorship and all that) complaining of a novel by, say, Angus Wilson. In particular, I like the use of the word "degenerate." It appeals to my "degenerate" sense of humour, the inevitable outcome of being a public library assistant. These lads may get somewhere if they keep this up. With Mr. A. C. Jones, I agree that former editors may be turning in their graves, but I suggest that indignation is not the cause of their unnatural activity. Surely they are anxious to get a peep at a library journal that is the subject of conversations, gets numerous letters, and is actually read—an editorial performance comparable to the climbing of Everest.

S. J. PAGET, *Folkestone Public Library.*

Moses or Joshua?

Recent correspondence on censorship has reminded me of the time when I was a mild victim of it myself. I was engaged on a thesis on the development of the German short story. Part of the background reading was the *Decameron*, and so I presented myself at the University Library and demanded to see a copy.

The young lady at the counter turned very red and disappeared, after muttering something about having to fetch the assistant librarian. This gentleman emerged looking rather embarrassed and said, "You'll need a certificate of moral worthiness from your tutor, old man, can't let you have the *Decameron* without it."

I was intrigued by the form that this certificate might take. Would it be like some medieval proclamation? (Know ye all that all the said poor scholar is deemed worthy of reading ye *Decameron* without calling down corruption upon himself). Would it perhaps be more suspicious? (We do give this saucy knave permission to read ye *Decameron*, but will not answer for the consequences). Or again would it merely be modern and curt? (Bearer may read the *Decameron*?). What would really have happened I never knew, for I was bemoaning my fate to a friend a couple of days later, when he said, "Don't worry; I bought a copy for a bob from that old bloke who keeps the book-stall in the market." It proved to be one of those perpetually tattered editions with very thin tissue paper over rather naughty Aubrey Beardsley type illustrations.

I believe that to this day the *Decameron* and similar works are locked in the University Library safe, along with first editions and other baubles. If you wish to view the promised land, you are taken down by a member of the library staff, and after much clicking of the tumblers are permitted to gaze and sometimes even to touch. Your role however is strictly that of Moses rather than Joshua.

Two things seem to emerge from my brush with censorship. Firstly it can nearly always be circumvented. Secondly, most banned books are so monumentally boring, that it is hardly worth troubling to obtain them.

Finally, I wish to thank our original contributor, Mr. Alan Thomas, for that bit about lack of crime in Ireland. The recent blowing up of customs posts and the shooting of police is doubtless mere patriotism.

ALAN BALL, *Finsbury Public Libraries.*

Break the Age Barrier

What valid reason can there be for the continuance of the Library Association ruling that a person who has passed Registration is not eligible for election to the Register until they reach the age of 23 or 25 before success in the Final examination is officially recognised?

Having regard for the considerable facilities existing for the study of the Library Association examinations and their constant development to even greater efficiency, it is now quite common to pass Registration and then have several years to wait before election to the Register. Taking into account the ever rising standards of the examinations themselves, it could not be said that earlier recognition would be too drastic a step.

There can be no quarrel with the insistence upon suitable practical experience being a prerequisite of election. Approved practical experience is a condition of almost every worthwhile professional qualification and only serves to enhance the value of a qualification in the eyes of the outside world. On the other hand it is possible for a 16-year-old entrant to have gained the prescribed number of years' experience by the ages of 19 or 21, discounting the claims of National Service. Assuming he is lucky enough to pass Registration at say 21, he can only look forward to a period of waiting before being elected to the Register and, consequently, to an A.P.T. post.

Some employers are willing to recognise the worth of examination success in its own right in appointing staff, but others are just as willing to hide behind the letter of every law in the book as a means of not paying the rate for the job. Isn't it about time we took the lead in ensuring the withdrawal of this petty restriction?

So come on Library Association, come off that high horse. Demonstrate your faith in your own examination system by relying upon it to sort the wheat from the chaff, the mature from the immature. Remove these arbitrary age barriers.

DONALD DAVINSON, *Warrington Public Library.*

Restrictive Practice

Mr. Whiteman's objection in your last issue, arises from a misunderstanding of the technique of photo-charging. The returned transaction card file is not checked for overdues until the twelfth week of issue, so that in practice, the fact that a book has been repeatedly renewed by 'phone or post does not become evident until it has been on loan for at least three months.

It does not seem unreasonable to ask the reader to produce the book before re-issuing for another period, and in fact the "restrictive practice," referred to was only introduced after it was discovered that one reader was keeping certain music scores on permanent loan, and another had had the *Records of the City of Norwich* at least for two years.

P. HEPWORTH, *City Librarian, Norwich.*

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By *Brian Baumfield*

Lambeth Public Libraries

Co-operation, like "the poor," is always with us. Of late when it is mentioned, there is often to be seen on librarians' faces a certain weariness, and a feeling that it has all been heard before, said before, and so thoroughly thrashed over that nothing new can come out of it. I make no apology for putting the matter before you again, because I believe that through active co-operation in a number of fields in the next ten years we can go a good way towards achieving the ends which we all wish to see. At the risk of seeming obvious, I will state what, in my opinion these are.

First, to be in a position to give a first-class service to our own public, and, more indirectly to the country.

Consequent on this, the emergence of librarianship as a recognised profession, which plays an important, not a secondary role in the life of the community. The main answer lies, as we all know, in new legislation, and much improved financial resources.

I would like to suggest that by applying the principles of co-operation in their widest connotation, much could be done to produce the state of affairs which would be favourable to the adoption of the new Act of Parliament, which we *must* have.

Firstly the field in which we have made some progress—co-operative book purchase and subject specialization. A few years ago there burst from the Northern Hemisphere with a blaze of lights—the Farmington Plan. Grandiose in conception, backed by the almighty dollar, it was warmly greeted by British librarians with the cry that "we must do likewise." Alas, we have dwindled, peaked, and pined, and the Library Association scheme for the co-operative provision of books, periodicals, and related material, is very far from the execution of its original conception.

But the position is not completely gloomy: we have a number of large projects, and some smaller ones are working well. Amongst the earlier schemes are The British National Book Centre, the splendid Metropolitan Borough Schemes, and the enterprising group of Lancashire libraries around Swinton and Pendlebury. More recently we have been introduced to CIRCIS and LADSIRLAC—or to put it into more intelligible English, The West London scheme, which now has 58 member libraries, both public and special, and The Liverpool and District Scientific, Industrial and Research Advisory Council. This latter plan, under the driving force of Dr. Chandler aims initially to improve the technical information services in Merseyside. In time it may prove as effective, and as good an advertisement for the great value of public library services, as the well known and long established Sheffield scheme.

Another recent undertaking is The Recording and Building of a National Collection of Books printed before 1801.

This selection of current projects serves to show how vital is the need amongst libraries of all kinds, how it is recognised that unless we do pull together we cannot give an effective service. The old tag of "united we stand . . ." is never more true than when applied to this particular sphere.

I feel that in due course we must become complete in our holdings of modern British books within each Regional Library Bureau area. If we *are* to play our full part, we must be able to deliver the goods—and quickly. At present only the very largest authorities can afford to buy on such a scale: present Bureau machinery is overloaded and necessarily lengthy. I would not suggest that with our present resources we can hope to achieve completion. But we could by a co-operative effort within (for convenience) each Bureau area, strengthen our holdings of the type of material wanted for Bureau loan, and allocate subject groups for a degree of specialization.

Such a scheme has existed since 1950 in the South Eastern area. The general supervision is entrusted to the executive Committee of the South Eastern region. (It excludes of course the Metropolitan Boroughs). Their aim is to ensure that all newly published books (vide the B.N.B.) are bought somewhere in the South Eastern area. To do this, the Dewey classification schedules

are divided into a series of narrow subject fields, which are allocated to Libraries according to their resources. With 83 Library authorities participating, the cost is kept low. In only 6 cases is it more than £100 p.a. Other examples are: Brighton £52, and Croydon £86—something like 7s. per 1,000 population. Old and foreign books were, by and large, not bought, nor reference books—and one or two other categories—based on the normal Regional Bureau rules. This scheme has enormously strengthened the resources of the area, and the participants are very pleased with the results after five years' operation.

Other regions have formed co-operative schemes with varying degrees of coverage, and I am convinced that if this practice were applied throughout, there could be prepared a framework on which we could confidently place a much larger structure.

A good deal of course depends on the good-will of the chief librarians—and particularly those of the great systems. I understand, by the way that the majority of these august personages have breakfast in bed each day; around 10 a.m. they reach for their copies of *The Times*, turn to the obituary column, and if their names aren't in it, they get up!

Another aspect of co-operation in this sphere which has not been sufficiently explored, is that between County and Municipal authorities. The majority of County Library Headquarters are situated in the County town, where there is already a long-established municipal system. At present, co-operation between them is usually limited to informal use by the County Library headquarters of the Municipal Reference Library—and that not to any large extent. A happy exception to this is the extensive co-operation between Hampshire County and Winchester City Library.

In all the smaller towns, a far more effective reference service could be built up by a formal co-operative scheme, in which one makes a concrete contribution to the other. There is at present an awful lot of duplicated effort. Carrying this a stage further, there is in Nottingham a co-operative agreement between the City, the County, and the University Libraries for co-operative provision of books and periodicals in certain fields.

Staff could be interchanged for short periods—again in Nottingham two assistants from the City and County authorities are interchanged for one to two months; it gives them valuable experience, and understanding of different practices, and goes some way towards preventing the ingrained, and hidebound outlook common in our profession.

But to revert to the general picture. The army of publications is growing each year: the army of scientists and technologists is yet to come. Where are they to turn for the materials they require? To the public libraries? or to some other source? They cannot afford to wait two months for the workings of the National Central Library. Their importance is real, is growing, and *they* will be given attention by any Government, now or in the future.

This brings me to the second aspect I would like you to consider—co-operation with Special Libraries. The question of the inclusion of special libraries into the National Interlending scheme is under discussion at the moment, and a memorandum was published in the *Record* in December, 1955, with the suggestion that a grouping of special libraries by subject on a national basis, might be the best answer. There is no doubt that Special Libraries are assuming a more important place in the Library world, partly for the very reasons I have outlined. Through the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, many of them are already in receipt of Government grants in the form of subsidies. I believe we can work far more effectively in co-operation with them. In most cases each has something to offer the other: the public libraries can supply approach material, the special Libraries specific and obscure titles. There are of course obvious difficulties, but the Public Libraries can adopt a more generous attitude. I deplore the extremists on both the special and public flank who do so much to harm good relations.

No one, I feel sure, will disagree with me when I say that the profession can be far more effectual if it speaks with one united voice, rather than minor discords from two main bodies and other splinter groups. I think the formation of a Municipal Libraries Section would be a good step along this road. By this, not only will the municipal libraries have opportunities for discussing their own problems, but the structure of the Library Association itself will

become more equable, and special libraries will have far less ground for claiming that it is a "Public Library Association."

One last point,—the flashpoint in library politics to-day—"The Memorandum." I do not wish to make this the main argument in my paper; there are many issues involved on both sides, and Local Government reorganisation will affect Libraries whether we like it or not. I think the Library Association in its wisdom—if not entirely with tact, has put this prickly pear forward with the right idea in view. In my opinion, if the measures were successfully put into practice we could go a long way towards vastly improved service. Mr. McColvin in a recent article in the *Library Review*, has suggested that co-operation can go too far. He points the obvious finger at the length of time involved in loan, and the disproportionate cost of getting a book. However I cannot see that this applies so much within a Bureau area, when both the time involved and the expense are very much less than when requests have to go through the National Central Library.

There are a number of far more fierce critics of the Regional Bureaux. These iconoclasts would sweep away the system built up carefully over the years, and substitute in its place loosely knit, informal arrangements based on the great city libraries, with surrounding authorities admitted into the fold. Are such schemes entirely without self-interest? Some of the small municipal systems, far from the cities, would be left quite out in the cold. It is more of a problem of reorganisation, than dissolution.

The next decade could be a vital one for us all. If some of the conditions which I have briefly outlined could be brought to pass, I feel we should be far more ready to receive the investigations of a Royal Commission on Library provision, together with its subsequent implications. We have yet to learn the art of lobbying Parliament and of public relations. There is I am sure a vast source of untapped goodwill amongst the public we serve, and we must learn how to unlock this, and turn it to practical support.

But we must speak with one voice, and we must have more to offer than we now do. Forgive me if I quote from Lady Macbeth, when I say that we must be bloody; bold and resolute,—and it doesn't much matter where we put the comma!

(From a paper given at a conference of the South West Branch of the Library Association, at Salisbury, April, 1956).

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THOMAS M. DOUST, STOKE NEWINGTON LIBRARY—

On the 9.42: or, a train of thought

What is wrong with the library profession?
Is there anything wrong with the library profession?
Does not the continual complaint of poor salaries suggest that there is?
Does not the protests of the L.A. and NALGO at senior posts offered at inadequate salaries suggest that there is?
Is it that librarians as a whole are not really worried about salaries?
Is this because so many of them are women?
Or is it because some librarians take up the career as a second choice?
Or is it all *infra dig*?
Are salaries poor because there are too many librarians?
Or because so many of them are in Local Government?
Or is it because so many of them are doing jobs which do not require a high, or any, professional qualifications?
Are salaries poor because librarians are too timid to complain?
Or are they too few and too scattered to get together?
Is the voice of the profession too weak to be heard?
Or is it not heard often enough?
Are the leaders of the profession not really interested?
Or are they too dignified?
Or don't they know how to set about improving matters?
Is lack of publicity about the profession due to lack of cash?
Or failure to take advantage of opportunities?
Do many librarians think that there is something wrong with the library profession?
Or are the moaners only a vociferous few?
What is wrong with the library profession?
Is there anything wrong with the library profesison?

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CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS—16TH MARCH

RUFFLED ROUTINE

Council Notes—17th January

In previous years Council Notes have reported that the business of the January meeting was largely routine. To a degree this is inevitable because at the first meeting committees have to be appointed, chairmen elected, officers co-opted, dates for future meetings and other functions fixed—all the cumbersome machinery of democracy oiled for another year's working. Successive new Presidents have looked to the January meeting to provide them with gentle exercise in Chairmanship whilst they become accustomed to the altitude on the platform. Often the routine becomes slightly ruffled—how much so depends largely upon the temper of the back bench. No spanners from this direction were necessary to stop the wheels this year. They failed even to start properly.

Miss Willson, impeccably punctual during ten years' service on the Council, arrived late at the first meeting of her Presidential year, a victim not of London's diminished transport services, but of a truculent hour-hand on her watch. Sundials may now become fashionable among Presidents. Mr. Tynemouth had whiled away some moments introducing the new Vice-President. When Miss Willson had thrown off her taxi-excited fluster and assumed Presidential dignity, the Past President began again, and decorated his successor with her badge and chain of office.

The Council is still of the opinion that some changes are likely to be necessary in the conditions of L.A. membership, but after hearing a report of a meeting between Honorary Officers of the L.A. and the A.A.L., they decided to defer further consideration until the recommendations of the L.A. Reorganisation Sub-Committee are made public.

Last year's Officers of Council were all re-elected and co-opted, and Mr. Thompson was appointed Chairman of Council. The Honorary Secretary's report was principally concerned with posts at inadequate salaries, most of which have received adequate publicity elsewhere. The Sussex Division were congratulated on their successful attempts to dissuade intending candidates for the undergraded post of Central Lending Librarian at Worthing.

The committees having been appointed, Council adjourned to allow them to meet. This left Mr. New, Honorary Publications Officer, to bat first after lunch. His report on the Press and Publications Committee contained the news that Clough's *Bookbinding for Librarians* is at the printers, and a recommendation that no action should be taken to obtain a new edition of Corbett's *Introduction to Public Librarianship*. This latter was promptly reversed by the Coun-

CATALOGUING AND CLASSIFICATION

Tutors' Comments edited by:

E. F. Ferry

"We now have a test which calls for a course of study and which may be regarded as a suitable prelude to the Registration examination." We quote ourselves (*Assistant Librarian*, Sept., 1956) without apology, as recent correspondence in *The Library Association Record* and a statement by Dr. C. B. Oldman in *The Library World* seem to endorse that opinion. 13th June, 1956, no doubt provided a rude awakening to many but, as one of our most respected Library School heads put it, another 600 rode into the Valley of Death in November last. Far be it from us to enter the lists with Messrs. Corbett, Kelly and Murison, but we would reiterate that the F.P.E. is now a rigorous test, and one which may well work towards the ultimate good of the profession, purifying like a refiner's fire, so to speak. One could also pull in arguments for the division of staff into professional and non-professional grades, but these things are out of place here.

So much for the preamble to the subject of our present edition, which is devoted to the last examination in Registration Group A. This is apparently a difficult group if one is to judge by pass percentages, but a little inside information suggests one of two things—assistants are (a) tackling the group too early or (b) without adequate preparation. Because it is the first part of a quadruple examination, it does not follow that it must occupy a similar position in an assistant's programme. In both theory papers, the factual knowledge should be obtainable with a reasonable amount of effort, but only experience and background knowledge can arm a candidate to deal with questions of opinion, or questions dealing with specialist types of cataloguing. This points to a few years' orientation before Group A is attempted. The second point is that in this Group, the candidate who "has a bash" is asking for trouble. He wastes his and the Association's money, and the examiner's time and temper.

We generalise, of course. There are those cases which demolish both points, but they are not to be taken by the mass as examples. We venture to suggest, however, that there is nothing to be afraid of in Group A, provided the subjects are approached with a relaxed and orderly mind. Facts can be learned—experience should do the rest. This really adds up to the fact that the training necessary for the F.P.E. should go some way towards preparing an assistant for the rigours of Registration, in mental discipline if not in total knowledge.

Not all questions in Group A have been dealt with. Straightforward questions on classification numbers or code rules have been ignored—students are quite capable of holding their personal inquests on such problems. Contributors have, therefore, concentrated upon the more contentious questions, not with a view to prolonging arguments, but as an attempt to resolve candidates' difficulties.

Once again, our thanks are due to a willing group of helpers, who include Misses N. K. Firby and M. G. Gregory and Messrs. W. E. G. Critchley, C. Harris, J. Ingham, J. Mills and C. W. Taylor.

CLASSIFICATION THEORY

Sl. No. Date

Q.1. Discuss the various definitions of bibliographical classification you have met, and embody your conclusions in your own definition.

Definitions of bibliographical classification fall into two broad groups; those drawn up by writers who believe in a "natural order," and that a bibliographical classification should be based on it, and those drawn up by writers who believe that bibliographical classification is a purely empirical matter of achieving a "helpful order," not necessarily related to scientific or logical classification.

In the first group we have Richardson's statement "The closer a classification can get to the true order of the sciences and the closer it can keep to it, the better the system will be and the longer it will last." This idea is followed by Sayers "The order of knowledge and of the sciences is the basis of book classification," and by Phillips "Book classification is a knowledge classification with adjustments conditioned by the physical form of books." Bliss adds a new note by substituting "the scientific and educational consensus," for the older idea of "natural order." This view is now rather old-fashioned, though it still has its adherents; writing as recently as 1953, Tauber says "That there are differences between knowledge classification and book classification is obvious, but the resemblance between them is even greater."

The reaction against these views seems to have set in for two reasons; firstly modern scientists are much less classification-minded than their predecessors, and secondly, difficulties arise in applying these ideas. The main difficulty is that knowledge classification deals with discrete ideas, whilst books are composite or conglomerate. Thus a bibliographical classification based on a knowledge classification is apt to include many headings for which no books exist, e.g. "library doormats" in the Decimal classification, whilst not including places for subjects on which many books have been written. Another reason is that if a chart of knowledge could be drawn up, it would be in the form of a solid (three dimensional) model; or at least a complex two dimensional diagram like that at the beginning of the Bibliographic Classification, and that such a model cannot be reproduced in a simple linear order of books on shelves or entries in a catalogue. Hence the modern interest in "information retrieval systems" like punched cards or co-ordinate indexing, which do not depend on a linear order and do allow a multi-dimensioned approach.

Thus we come to the second group of definitions, exemplified by Hulme: "Classification is a mechanical time-saving operation for the discovery of knowledge in books." Hulme considers that the confusion of bibliographical classification on the one hand, with knowledge classification and logical classification on the other, has greatly hindered constructive thought on bibliographical classification, and Foskett has even suggested that we drop the term "Classification," as applied to books, and use "systematic arrangement" instead. Hulme's ideas are followed by Savage in his *Manual of Book Classification and Display*. Ranganathan, too, does not introduce any idea of "natural order," saying merely that the purpose of classification "is to arrange books in a helpful order."

Despite Bliss's works, this second school is in the ascendant, and at present there is a movement away from the idea that one scheme of classification is suitable for all kinds of library, to the view that since different types of library have different aims and needs they will require different classification schemes, e.g. a "reader interest" arrangement in small popular home reading libraries, a scholarly bibliographical classification for a large general reference or university library, and a special scheme for a special library.

My own definition would be "Bibliographical classification is a method of arranging either books and documents, or entries in a catalogue, in an order which staff and readers will find convenient and helpful for the purpose of facilitating reference and information work."

Q.3. Explain why readers may find the books in which they are interested, distributed in several places on the shelves.

The answer to this question may be divided into two parts. Firstly the theories on which a book classification is based can result in the apparent separation of books on a particular subject. Secondly the layout of an individual library and the physical form of individual books may cause a similar separation.

"Subject" matter can be divided into two parts—"material" and "purpose." The practical classification recognises that "purpose" is the major part of a subject and the schedules are constructed to give places for the "purpose" aspect. For example, in Dewey, anyone interested in ships will find relevant information at 387, 623.8, 359, and 656. A reader could easily argue that all these aspects of the subject "ships" should be at one place in the scheme. However, it is more useful to the greatest number of readers to recognise these aspects ("purpose") as being individual and separate subjects more closely related to other subjects, e.g. 359 Naval science is closer to Military Science 355, than to Shipbuilding 623.8. At this point the student could refer to Brown's Subject Classification which attempted to be "one place," thus grouping "subject" by "material."

The wider the subject in which the reader is interested, the more likely it is that relevant matter will be distributed at several places on the shelves. A reader interested in English poetry will find all books on this subject together if he is using a Dewey classed library, but if he is interested in English literature of the 18th century, he will also find books at 820, 822, 823, 824, etc. Likewise the reader who wants guides to Rome will find all the guides in one place, but if he wishes to make a complete study of Italy and the Italians, he will find relevant material in the Sociology, Fine Art, Travel and History classes. All that a classification can do is to arrange books in groups which will be most useful to the largest number of readers. That is why the Library of Congress scheme is so good, because it was fitted to an actual large collection of books, which may be said "to have arranged themselves" according to readers' needs. Classifications arranged according to a compiler's strongly held preconceived theories of knowledge will always result in unexpected subject distribution.

Now the physical causes of this type of subject separation should be considered. There is the problem of shelving books with wide range of format. Most libraries require some "parallel arrangements," and in spite of explanatory guide notices, many readers do not find all that the library possesses on a particular subject. Another cause of this problem is local schemes of subject displays; because too much "broken order" is again putting difficulties in the reader's way when he is trying to locate the maximum information on a particular subject.

Q.4. *Describe any circumstances in which you would advocate the use of "broad classification."*

First of all define "broad classification":—the use of only the main sections of a classification schedule in a library for the convenience of readers, or the avoidance of minute sub-divisions of classes. Then state that this is a controversial issue in the application of library classification. The advocates of "broad classification" maintain that too close classification results in long numbers which confuse readers. Also with a small collection of books minute sub-division can divide rather than group. In the United States there is a strong leaning towards "broad classification" for the small and medium public libraries. Quote here the 15th edition of Dewey which was a severe pruning of the 14th ed., and gave its blessing to the adoption of "broad classification," whenever local conditions made it possible. Mention that the proposed 16th ed. is to revert to the pattern of the 14th ed.

Having stated the general case for "broad classification," then give specific instances where you might use it. The following are examples where there could be a good case put forward for "broad classification":—

(1) Public libraries with stocks up to 50,000 volumes serving populations up to 40,000. A critic might say that, in a small public library, to start by using "broad classification" may cause more work in the future when the library grows and close classification is required for a much increased stock. However, in practice there is a limit to the size of any public library, which can be gauged when that service is begun. This size limit is determined by the possible population increase in the area and the financial wealth of that area.

(2) In large public libraries arranged by subject departments, the general reading department could be broadly classified, because of the type of recreational reader being catered for. Of course the special subject departments themselves would require close classification.

(3) Junior libraries could well have broad classifications because minute subdivisions are of little value to children. Furthermore, the "life" of junior book-stock is not very long and close classification would be wasted time.

(4) Branch libraries could have broad classification where the stock is predominately recreational. However, it should be noted that such a policy in branch libraries depends very much on whether the central library maintains a union catalogue, because in that case full subject location value of a catalogue would be minimised if part of the stock was broadly classed.

(5) The student could mention that many National Libraries are broadly classified, e.g. British Museum. This is because readers using such libraries are supposed to know pretty well beforehand the books they require by author. That is to say that users of National Libraries are usually scholars who do their initial subject location by means of bibliographies.

In conclusion the student should state that the application of "broad classification" depends purely on local conditions, and that if there is any doubt whether it should be applied because of possible future library developments, then it would be advisable to apply the full schedules.

Q.6. It has been announced that the 16th edition of the Decimal Classification will revert to the pattern of the 14th edition. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this policy.

This question was obviously set to test the interest of the student in current professional periodical reading with particular reference to *The Library Association Record* of June, 1956. In this issue, the Chairman of the Dewey Classification Editorial Policy Committee deals with much of the background in the building of the editions of Dewey since 1930, and a reading of this article together with that of Thelma Eaton in the November, 1955, issue of the *Record* would have provided ample material for a good answer. The criticisms levelled at the 15th edition covered many points; the main contention appeared to be that in an effort to produce a "standard" edition, the Editorial Board had departed from the system as it had been adopted in libraries throughout the world, and that this deviation would result in great inconvenience and cost in alteration or adaption. It would appear that the principle of "no-change" enunciated since the inception of the scheme had been violated, and about a quarter of the numbers in the 15th edition would involve the medium or large library in considerable adjustments. Students might balance this obvious practical fact, with the constant demand for the need of revised schedules. The large national bibliographical services, such as the B.N.B. and H. W. Wilson, Co., too, were placed in an invidious position in that numbers allocated by the 14th edition now indicated other subjects and the original subjects enumerated bore new numbers.

It was obvious, therefore, that these changes threatened to undermine the value and integrity of the scheme and the Special Advisory Committee in 1953 submitted new recommendations embodying a near return to the accepted features of the 14th edition. They stressed that re-allocations should be permitted, but that they should be restricted and only made where required by new ideas and approaches, where previous treatment had become absurd or where there was an overwhelming need or demand.

This does not indicate a lack of flexibility in the outlook of the Committee; indeed, as the work on the new 16th edition progressed, it was revealed that the revision was keeping pace with knowledge and not being limited to another "procrustean bed." A free hand in the allocation of numbers between the 4,600 of Edition 15 and the 30,000 of Edition 14 could result in a well-balanced and evenly expanded scheme and allow full coverage of subjects.

In studying this background of the new edition and its potential virtues, the student should not lose sight of the value of the 15th edition and of any possibility of the development of its pattern. In spite of the many criticisms raised, interesting new points were introduced, and in many cases more sensible expansions adopted. A reading of periodical articles and the section in Phillips will provide some of the basic material for the "pros" here, but the return to the original pattern of the earlier editions will certainly be welcomed by all libraries who have had to contemplate the re-numbering of thousands of books and the re-typing of many more thousands of catalogue entries.

Q.7. Examine the theory of the collocation of applications with the sciences on which they are based, as interpreted by Brown in the Subject Classification.

In the Introduction to the Subject Classification, Brown states "The old distinction between theoretical and applied science is gradually disappearing from all modern text-books," and consequently formulates his principle of placing "each subject as near as possible to the science on which it is based."

This statement contains much truth. No chemist would approve Dewey's separation of pure chemistry and chemical technology, but there are not many such examples of a technology being based on one pure science; it is more common to find a technology being based on several pure sciences, e.g. the automobile industry. Research in the motor industry would include engines, airflow over body shapes, properties of various materials, wood, metal, plastics, etc. Such composite technologies cannot be collocated with any one pure science and Brown was wrong to put the automobile industry at B 570 following physics. In addition to the scientific technologies there are many crafts and trades not based on any pure science, e.g. furniture making, plumbing, etc.

The distinction, which Brown failed to draw, between a scientific technology and a craft or trade, lies in the question of what prior study is needed to carry it out. Obviously a chemical engineer must study pure chemistry at a high level before he can become a chemical engineer; equally obviously a radio engineer must study physics at an advanced level. Therefore Brown was correct to collocate Pure Chemistry (D 700) with Chemical Technology (D 900) and Radio Communication (B 637) with Physics (B 000). But a chimney sweep does not need to do a University or Technical College course in physics, nor does a steeple jack, consequently Brown was wrong to subordinate these two subjects as sub-divisions of heat in physics (C 215 and C 217 respectively).

The distinction between a scientific technology based on one pure science and a composite technology is that the latter recruits workers with different sorts of scientific background.

The trouble with the Subject Classification is that Brown, having formulated a valid principle, carried it to ridiculous extremes because he failed to distinguish between: (a) a scientific technology which is wholly or mainly based on a single pure science, (b) composite technologies based on several pure sciences, (c) trades or crafts which do not require a detailed theoretical basis, being taught mainly by the apprenticeship method.

Any modern scheme must do as Bliss does and group the scientific technologies with pure science, but provide a separate Useful Arts class for composite technologies and for trades and crafts. Such a classification should have alternative locations to suit the needs of particular libraries.

Q.9. To what extent can a classification scheme designed for a particular library be successful in general use?

In the first place, students will appreciate that practically all the main book schemes were formulated for one particular library in the first instance, or as a result of the experience of the formulator in one particular library. Candidates should recognise that only a library with a comprehensive stock could be used as a basis for such general treatment. Bearing this in mind, this question could perhaps best be answered by referring particularly to the Library of Congress scheme which has been successfully adopted in many libraries of different types. In Britain, for example, it is used in libraries such as the National Library of Wales, the Edinburgh Public Library, The Home Office and other government departments, and the scheme is gaining favour particularly in college libraries. The main value in adopting such a scheme is that it is based essentially on books and on the use made of a stock of 3,000,000 books; it is unlikely that general libraries will have any difficulty in placing books in such inflated schedules. On the other hand, it will be appreciated that the Library of Congress is really a series of large specialised libraries and the amount of detail and specific allocation employed may not be necessary or suitable in general libraries where the stocks in particular classes may be small or even non-existent.

Despite these disadvantages and the often complex notation involved, the scheme has much to offer. The permanence of the classification is assured by the financial assistance given by the U.S. Government, and the quarterly publication listing new numbers has obvious merits recommending its adoption, particularly in large libraries.

CATALOGUING THEORY

Q.2. *What in your opinion are the TEN most important events in the history of cataloguing? State briefly the reason for your choice.*

I doubt if any ten people would agree without prior consultation on the same ten "most important" events in the history of cataloguing. Catalogues have existed as long as libraries; but the following list excludes ancient and mediaeval catalogues and cataloguing methods as they have little, if any, direct influence on cataloguing to-day:—

(1) *The British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books*, 1881-1900; and supplement 1900-05. New ed. begun in 1931. The old edition, out of print for many years, has been reproduced by photomechanical means in a reduced size, which, although difficult to read, is still extensively consulted. Although earlier catalogues existed, the B.M. general catalogue may be said to have originated modern cataloguing practice. It is widely used by other libraries. It set a standard for other library catalogues, and is an example of the application of a system of rules for author headings of great value.

(2) *Library of Congress Catalogue*.

After a series of printed book catalogues and catalogues compiled from slips pasted in, the Library of Congress decided, at the end of the nineteenth century, on a card catalogue, using printed cards. The influence of this decision was far-reaching. Sets of printed cards have been deposited in a number of large libraries. Since 1901 the printed cards have been available on sale to other libraries.

Library of Congress printed cards are now used throughout America and have enormously influenced cataloguing practice in the U.S.A. Not only is the Library of Congress the chief example of centralised cataloguing, it is also an example of co-operative cataloguing, cards being printed from entries supplied by a number of other libraries. The reproduction of the card catalogue in book form by photo mechanical means has extended the catalogue's influence to libraries in other countries.

(3) *The British Museum Rules for Compiling the Catalogues in the Department of Printed Books*.

First published in 1841, after being approved by the Trustees in 1839, Panizzi's "91" rules were intended as a code of practice for the "General Catalogue." These rules formed the first thorough code for author entry, and most of its principles are now accepted even though individual rules differ in later codes. Panizzi's rules have been amended by the B.M. from time to time, and further revision in the light of modern cataloguing needs and practice is at the present time under active consideration by the B.M.; but the code is still a standard code widely studied, and as late as 1949 the 2nd ed. of the A.L.A. code refers to it. To some extent, also, the rules influence the choice of heading used in the B.N.B.—anonymous works, for instance.

(4) *Cutter's Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue*.

First printed in 1876, this code included for the first time an outline of cataloguing principles and rules for subject headings. Although primarily intended for a dictionary printed catalogue, these rules form the basis of American card dictionary catalogues, though the rules for author headings have been largely superseded by later codes.

(5) *Linderfelt's Eclectic Card Catalog Rules: Author and Title Entries*, 1890.

This is important partly because of its comparative nature, the rules of the B.M., Cutter, Dewey, Perkins, and others being compared with Dziatzko's and partly because it forms a translation and adaptation of Dziatzko's rules, which have had such a large influence in German cataloguing.

(6) *The American Library Association and Library Association's Cataloguing Rules: Author and Title entries*.

The A.L.A. first published a code of rules in 1883, the L.A. in 1893. From 1900 revision of both codes was in progress in both countries, and from this revision developed a system of joint consultation which resulted in this "Joint Code" which remains the basis of cataloguing in many libraries to-day, par-

ticularly public libraries. A revised American edition has appeared and in England a committee of the L.A. is considering revision for an English edition.

(7) *A.L.A. Cataloguing Rules for Author and Title Entries, 2nd ed. 1949.*

This revision of the American edition of the "Joint Code" was first published in a preliminary edition in 1941. Unfortunately at that time joint consultation between the two countries was not possible. The rules have been expanded to include more comprehensive treatment of maps, music, serials, government documents, etc., and are now grouped systematically. Rules for descriptive cataloguing, included in the 1941 edition, are excluded, in view of the Library of Congress's *Rules for Descriptive Cataloguing*. The number of rules is extensive, however, and their complexity has given rise to a new study of the cataloguing principles they apply,—Seymour Lubetzy's *Cataloguing Rules and Principles*, which may well result in a further revision, and a simpler standard code.

(8) *The use of cards for catalogues.*

Early catalogues, whether printed or manuscript, were in book form as a rule. A suggestion that a library index should be made on cards had been made in France at the end of the 18th century, but it was many years before card catalogues became general practice. The Library of Congress printed cards stimulated the use of cards, and, with the typewriter, encouraged the practice of "unit" cards. During the twentieth century card catalogues became the usual type of catalogue, particularly in America, where the dictionary catalogue is almost universal, but there is a contemporary swing back to the printed book form type of catalogue by a number of English libraries.

(9) *The development of photomechanical means of reproduction during recent years.*

This has enabled such important works as the B.M. catalogue to be reprinted, and the Library of Congress card catalogue to be published in book form. Other libraries are using various means of photo-litho-offset printing to reproduce both catalogues and booklists.

Various adaptations of stencil machines for the reproduction of catalogue cards have stimulated central and co-operative cataloguing; and photography has been adapted to reproduce catalogues for special purposes in America. The influence of microcards on cataloguing is not yet known, but it has been suggested that the cards themselves form the catalogue entry, and the use of microphotography, card, film and print, has necessitated consideration of rules for their treatment.

(10) Finally there is the *British National Bibliography, 1950-*

Centralised cataloguing in Britain now provides a short time after publication a standard catalogue entry complete with Dewey Decimal class number, for the majority of books published in England. Since 1956, printed cards have also been supplied. The subject indexing has set a new standard of indexing in classified catalogues, and the growing awareness in American libraries of the merits of the classified catalogue may be encouraged by this example.

Q.3. *Write brief descriptive notes on FIVE works which are in your opinion essential in a cataloguing room. Language dictionaries, cataloguing codes, subject indexes and classification schemes are not to be included.*

Works regarded as essential in a cataloguing room may be said to form either sources for the catalogue entry—main heading, form of author's name or of other names in the entry (editor, biography) or date of publication, etc.; or sources of information about the subject of the book and which are therefore used in classifying or in assigning subject headings.

Choice is to some extent dependent on the kind of cataloguing practised and the type of material catalogued—"special" library cataloguing obviously requires subject bibliographies limited in scope and unsuitable for general libraries. Full cataloguing of older books means constant reference to such works as the British Museum catalogue; in "short" cataloguing the British Museum catalogue will be little used. The extent to which cataloguing reference books are used by other members of the staff in other departments and by readers affects the choice also, and the personal preference of the cataloguer is not without effect. The following five works are selected as essential for a cataloguing

room dealing both with newly-published books and with older works for a large general library, which gives fairly full cataloguing to all additions.

1. *The British National Bibliography.*

This is so essential a tool of modern cataloguing that it is a little surprising that the question did not exclude it along with codes, classification schemes, indexes, etc. It is a comprehensive work of reference for most material published in England since 1950, providing both cataloguing and subject information. Full authors' names are given for the majority of entries, dates of publication, and subject placings. Added subject entries are indicated and subject headings or index headings are shown both by the headings over the entries and in the monthly indexes. Cumulations are issued each quarter and an annual volume at the end of the year. The entries are arranged in classified order according to the Dewey Decimal Classification (though few if any libraries will wish to use all expanded numbers on the shelves) and there is a full name index. American books which are published in England are also frequently included and a selection of government publications. Maps and music are the main groups of material excluded. Very little reference to other works is needed for books which appear in the B.N.B.

2. *Everyman's Encyclopaedia*, 3rd ed. 1950.

This is a very good "small" encyclopaedia which, while not giving the detailed information of the Britannica or Chambers', is probably more at home in the usually congested confines of a cataloguing department. The atlas volume is an added advantage; 12 volumes of crown octavo size make it a compact work to handle.

3. *A.M. Hyamson's "A Dictionary of Universal Biography of All Ages and All Peoples."*

First published in 1916, there is a 2nd edition published in 1951. Brief biographical entries, on the principle of one line an entry, give full names, dates, occupation. The 2nd edition also indicates in which one of about thirty general biographies fuller information may be found.

Alternatives to Hyamson could be *Webster's Biographical Dictionary* or *The New Century Cyclopedia of Names*. The latter is a three volume work, first published in 1894, later ed. 1954, with an American bias, but in addition to biographies, information is given on names of places, events, literary characters and many other names, in short paragraph form. It is, however, expensive.

Selection of the last two "essential" works from among those desirable is more difficult. The British Museum General Catalogue of Printed books obviously ranks as desirable, but its bulk precludes it from many cataloguing rooms. It would appear to be, rather, a work which should be available for consultation rather than an essential tool. A similar argument would apply to the *Library of Congress Catalogue*, but the *London Library Catalogue* is a useful finding tool, particularly for anonymous works and oriental writers. A good technical dictionary is almost essential—and Chambers' would be useful here. Other works which would be considered essential are *Whitaker's Almanack* (useful for government departments, names of societies, peerage, etc.), Van Nostrand's *Scientific Encyclopaedia* (fuller treatment of scientific information given than Chambers', but more complex, whereas the latter gives word definitions). Any one of these or a large scale atlas, or world gazetteer might be included instead of one of the last two works.

Q.6. *Draft proposed rules for the cataloguing or indexing of modern maps to meet the requirements of a commercial library having to supply detailed information.*

This is the type of question which the examiners, in their comments on the examinations, are wont to say is intended for the candidate who has specialised experience. For that reason it might better have been commented on in these pages by a tutor who had some such specialised experience—however

Before drafting the proposed rules, the candidate has to consider the type of library in question, and make a number of decisions (on which of course he may have preconceived ideas when entering the examination room). First of all one can safely dismiss any idea of entry under cartographer, and the basic rule will need to provide for entry under subject (i.e. region). It is then necessary to decide whether an alphabetical or classified order is to be used. As the

requests are for detailed information, which can usually be supplied by reference to maps of one specific area rather than by consulting a wide range of maps, an alphabetical arrangement will be preferable—it also obviates the need for a subject index. This decision will involve a further one; whether to catalogue a region under its own name (as in the British Museum Rules), or to refer it to the widest possible geographical division (as in Cutter and the Library of Congress). The latter arrangement has the advantage of grouping together maps on related areas, while at the same time retaining an alphabetical arrangement which is simpler to use than a classified arrangement. A region index will probably be necessary.

Yet another decision has to be made—this time on the question of subject in the case of geological, climatic, railway maps, etc. Is it sufficient to add the subject after the regional heading, or should additional subject entries be provided? It has been suggested that a catalogue with subject entries is of more use to specialists, but usually information will be required on a special aspect of *one* region, e.g. Railways of France, and subject sub-division of regions will adequately provide for such enquiries. It is doubtful whether the value of the multiplicity of entries which will result from a decision to enter under subject as well as region will justify the time and expense involved in making them, even in a library of this type.

Under each heading I would suggest a chronological arrangement, with the most recent map first.

These problems, and the reasons behind the decisions taken, will not of course be included in the answer, but the draft rules will depend on them. Rules for descriptive cataloguing, e.g. title, scale, edition, size, place of publication and publisher, and date, will also be necessary.

The draft rules may well be on the following lines:—

1. *Main entry.* The main entry for each map is to be made under the region delineated.
2. *Heading.* The heading is to consist of the largest geographical division in which the area covered by the map is situated, sub-divided as necessary, e.g. Asia—India—Calcutta.
3. *Sub-division by subject.* Maps dealing with a special subject, e.g. climate, geology, railways, etc., shall be entered under the heading as in Rule 2 above, with subject sub-division. e.g. Asia—India—Climate.
4. *Title.* The title is to be given as on the map itself, but it should be augmented if necessary to indicate the exact subject of the map. If no title is given, one is to be supplied.
5. *Scale.* Scale is to be given in the form 1: 63360, etc. [The collection will probably contain a number of continental maps, which use this means of indicating scale.]
6. *Edition.* Details of edition are to be given where necessary.
7. *Size.* Size is to be given in inches, from top to bottom and across, the innermost borderlines being taken as the limits.
8. *Imprint.* The place of publication and the publisher's name are to be given when readily ascertainable.
The *date* is always to be given. Where no date is given on the map itself, an approximate one is to be supplied. If the date of survey differs from the date of publication, this should be stated.
9. *Series.* If the map is one of a series, the name of the series is to be given.
10. *Sheet number.* If there is a sheet number, as in the case of Ordnance Survey maps, etc., this is to be given.
11. *Notes.* Any additional information which is considered important may be given in the form of a note.
12. *Rules of arrangement.*
 - A. General maps and atlases.
 - B. General maps of special subjects.
 - C. Maps of continents, in alphabetical order.
 - D. The maps of each continent shall be followed first by maps of regions contained in it, e.g. South-East Asia, arranged alphabetically.
 - E. These shall be followed by maps of each country contained in the continent, arranged alphabetically.

- F. The maps of each country shall be followed by maps of those counties, states, etc. which form part of it.
- G. Maps of counties, states, etc. shall be followed by maps of cities, towns, etc. contained in them.
- H. General maps of a particular region shall be followed by maps dealing with the special aspects of that region, e.g. Canals, Climate, Geology, Railways, etc.
- I. Arrangement under each heading shall be chronological, with the most recent map first.

Q.8. *What are the main exceptions to the general rule for institutions in the A.A. Code? How far are these justified?*

In the A.A. Code, there are a number of exceptions to the general rule that institutions should be entered under the name of the place in which they are located.

The main class of exceptions is governed by the principle underlying the rule for those institutions with names beginning with a proper noun or adjective, and therefore distinctive. Such institutions, directs this rule, should not be entered under the place where they are located, but where most people are likely to look, and that is under the first part of their names.

John Carroll University, Cleveland.

Refer from Cleveland. John Carroll University.

There are, however, exceptions to the exceptions (churches, monasteries, Carnegie libraries, etc.) which actually involve reversion to the original rule and may therefore be justifiably considered outside the scope of this question.

Another class of exceptions is governed by the important rule for national institutions, which directs that such institutions, often called Imperial, Royal and National, which include in their names the name of the country, are to be entered under the name of the country.

Wales, National Library. *Aberystwyth.*

Refer from Aberystwyth. National Library of Wales.

In this section of the code, there is also a body of rules governed by the principle that parts of an institution should be entered under the whole. Thus colleges and schools forming part of a university are entered under the name of the university of which they are a part. In the same way, university libraries, museums and any other subordinate departments are entered under the name of the University. The same principle is adhered to in the case of private collections of say books, coins or pictures, which would normally be entered under the name of their owner, but, if passed into the possession of an institution, must be entered under the name of the institution. So must botanical and zoological gardens, and observatories, which would normally be entered under the name of their place of location, if they are part of an institution.

Oxford University, Balliol College.

Refer from Balliol College, Oxford.

This concludes the survey of the main exceptions. There are others, but they are concerned mainly with American institutions.

How far are these exceptions justified? The general rule that entry should be made under the place of location of the institution is simple and straightforward. That there is some doubt about the advisability of the main exception to this general rule (that is that institutions whose names begin with a proper noun or adjective should be entered under their names) is clearly indicated by the two modifications printed in the code after it. The first modification suggests that the scope of the exception might be *extended* to include all institutions with distinctive names, the second suggests that the scope might be *limited* to making it apply only to institutions in the British Commonwealth and the United States of America.

Further indications of unhappiness on the part of the rule makers is shown by the exceptions to the exception in the case of churches and other institutions, which are always entered under the provisions of the general rule.

The principle underlying these exceptions is one that often occurs in the Code, and that is to enter under the form most likely to be looked under. The problems are firstly, who knows what form most people will look under, and secondly, how far is one justified in complicating the rule?

Another factor to be taken into consideration here is that stricter adherence to the general rule would bring the A.A. Code more in line with other codes of rules.

The rule outlined above for national institutions is a further unnecessary complication. Is a reader looking for a publication issued by the National Library of Wales going to look in the catalogue under "National," "Aberystwyth" or "Wales." If there is an element of doubt, and I consider there is, would it not be better to keep to the general rule?

In deciding how far the above exceptions are justified, it is as well to bear in mind that every exception to a general rule is a complication, and is, therefore, to be avoided unless there is a very good reason for it. In my opinion, the A.A. Code would be improved by the elimination of some of the above exceptions, and by a stricter adherence to the general rule.

Q.9. *What changes would you advocate in the A.A. Code rules for the treatment of imprint and collation? Justify any omissions and additions you may propose*

This question was obviously set to discover whether the candidate had thought for himself, and not merely learned the Code parrot-fashion, although it does of course require a thorough knowledge of the rules. There can be no definite answer to such a question—it is a subject upon which opinions differ considerably. The importance lies not so much in the candidate's opinions—although they must naturally be within the bounds of common-sense and practicability—but in the arguments put forward in support of them. Well-reasoned arguments which show that the candidate has thought carefully about the rules will bring good marks, even if the examiners are not entirely in agreement with the opinions expressed.

In each case the A.A. Code rules should be stated clearly, and then dealt with point by point.

First of all, Imprint. There is probably less need for revision here than in the rules for Collation. Provision could be made for omitting place of publication, except for books published outside Great Britain (in the United States of course it would be outside the U.S.). An abbreviated form of publisher's name might be permitted, e.g. Oxford U.P., and the omission of & Co., Ltd., Inc., etc. The rules for date might make provision for giving the original date of publication (when known) for a book which has been reissued without revision.

The rules for Collation offer rather more scope for revision, and here the student who has read Piggott's *Cataloguing Principles and Practice* will be at an advantage, for the questionnaire sent out for this inquiry included a question on the use made of the items of collation in a catalogue entry. Many libraries in these days give only a bare minimum of collation, and there is much to be said in favour of short or simplified cataloguing. In many cases detailed collation is unnecessary, and it may be possible that, apart from stating the number of volumes if more than one, it is necessary at all in cataloguing for lending libraries. This view is probably not generally shared, and may well be rather too extreme for the examiners.

If some collation is to be retained, I would suggest pagination, which does give some rough indication of the scope of the book, and a less detailed account of illustrations. I can see no reason for giving size, but in the case of books which are too large to be housed on the general shelves, some indication must be given on the catalogue entry. I would suggest that if it is ever necessary to give size, it should be in inches rather than centimetres. It is much easier to visualise 9 ins. than 22 cm. With regard to illustrations, it is generally held that it is useful to mention maps in geographical works, and plans, tables and diagrams in technical books, but how many such books do in fact appear *without* them? Frontispiece, photographs and facsimiles seem quite superfluous, and the term *illus.* of itself means little. Plates may sometimes be useful—particularly if they are coloured—and if any indication of plates is to be given, it would be desirable to state when this is the case. Is it necessary, however, to state the number of plates, or to indicate illustrations in the text? Bibliographies are not at present included in the collation, but if they are worthy of mention, I feel they would be better included there rather than in a note. But are the short reading lists, sometimes found at the end of each chapter, which we usually list as bibliographies, really worthy of the name?

In view of the differences of opinion, and the need to provide rules to suit different types of library, is there something to be said for making the rules "permissive," or of returning to Cutter's idea of making provision for short, medium and full cataloguing? Another point which might be considered is whether the production of printed cards by the B.N.B., and the already widespread practice of duplicating catalogue entries on the unit principle, make the economies of omitting or simplifying imprint and collation worthwhile. Would it perhaps be better to omit certain items and to elaborate the others to make them more readily understandable to the average reader?

These opinions are, as I have already said, purely personal, but they do, I think, cover the main points that should have been in the mind of the candidate, and may perhaps provoke future victims to give some thought as to how they would answer a question of this nature.

PRACTICAL CLASSIFICATION AND CATALOGUING

GENERAL COMMENTS.

1. A fair paper; the only unusual feature was the number of added subject entries necessary. Usually, thorough indexing can make these superfluous.

2. Capitalisation, etc., in the following examples are strictly according to the 1908 Code; names of publishers are given exactly as found on title-page. Consistency is more easily achieved in this way. But students should know that examiners are fairly tolerant in accepting modifications of this practice.

3. For the first three titles, chain indexing is advised. Although, apparently, examiners do not attach many (if any) marks to the index entries for the more general heads, these often provide, even for the narrow requirements of examination cataloguing, valuable key words or signposts to the specific subject (e.g., Elections, or Politics in Q.2) and should not be omitted. A vital function of the index entries (and of the subject headings and references in the DC) is to lead enquirers from *all* terms likely to be consulted by them when searching for a subject. Parts of entries which candidates would underline have been printed in italics.

Q.1.

Classified file.

1. 387.

Harnack, Edwin P. , *editor.*

All about ships and shipping; a handbook of popular nautical information, . . . Edited by Edwin P. Harnack. 9th ed. . . . rev. . . . London, Faber and Faber limited, 1952.

xii, 707 p. col. front., illus., 33 col. pl., plans, tables, diagrs, 14 cm.

Coloured chart on endpaper. Illustrations include several hundred national, house and signal flags, funnels, and ship silhouettes.

Information ranges from ship construction and navigation to maritime societies and coastguard services. Gives lists of ships of British and foreign navies and of principal shipping companies.

2. 359.

Harnack, Edwin P. , *editor.*

All about ships and shipping; a handbook of popular nautical information. 9th ed. rev. 1952. 387

Shelved at 387

Author and title index.

3. Harnack, Edwin P., , *editor.*

All about ships and shipping; a handbook of popular nautical information. 9th ed. rev. 1952. 387

Subject index (using chain procedure).

Shipping: Commerce	387
Transport: Commerce	385/388
Communications: Commerce	380
Commerce	380
Naval forces	359
Administration: Political science	350

COMMENTS.

1. The chief problem is one typical in such classifications as Dewey, which scatter the various aspects of a subject like Ships and Shipping, when faced with a comprehensive book on that subject. However, 387 clearly covers most major aspects, except 359 (hence the added entry); the mention of ship construction (623) and certain operational factors (656) does not seem to justify more added entries.

2. *Suggested class nos. in other schemes:* BC: TNS + Added entries RN and UK—LC: HE573 + Added entry VA40 and VK155—SC: B650 (to be indexed as "Ships and shipping") + Added entry B806—UDC 387 + Added entry 359.

Q.2.

Classified file.

1. 328.42.

The Times.

. . . House of commons, 1951. With full results of the polling, biographies of members and unsuccessful candidates, photographs of all members, and a complete analysis, statistical tables, and a map of the General Election, October, 1951. London, The Times office [1951?]

256p. ports., maps, tables. 23½ cm.

Includes complete list of members of the Government—Cabinet ministers and ministers not in the Cabinet.

2. 324.42.

The Times.

House of commons, 1951. With full results of the polling, biographies of members and unsuccessful candidates, photographs of all members, and a complete analysis, statistical tables, and a map of the General Election, October, 1951. [1951?]

Shelved at 328.42.

Author and title index.

3. The Times.

House of Commons, 1951. With full results of the polling, biographies of members and unsuccessful candidates, photographs of all members, and a complete analysis, statistical tables, and a map of the General Election, October, 1951. [1951?]

328.42

Subject index (using chain procedure).

Members of Parliament 328.42

House of Commons *see* Great Britain. *House of Commons*

Commons, House of *see* Great Britain. *House of Commons*

Great Britain. *House of Commons* 328.42

Parliament *see* Great Britain. *Parliament*

Great Britain. *Parliament* 328.42

Great Britain: Legislation 328.42

Legislation: Political science 328

Political science 320

Politics 320

General elections: Great Britain 324.42

Parliamentary elections: Great Britain 324.42

Great Britain: Elections 324.42

Elections: Political science 324

COMMENTS.

1. In annotation, this is a clear demonstration of the basic rule—nothing in annotation should merely repeat what is explicit or implicit in title description or any other part of the entry.

2. Owing to the separation in Dewey of Elections as a subject from legislation (of which Elections is clearly a subordinate "Problem") two subject entries are necessary if both approaches (Parliament, Commons, etc. as well as General Election, Elections, etc.) are to be covered.

3. Main entry should be under House of Commons since this is the thing affected. Merrills (and Ranganathan's) rule about the influence of one thing on another is one of the most ubiquitous and useful in practical classification.

4. If any students chose such numbers as 324.26 Election results or 328.32

Lower house, they had the wrong facets. The most important facet (the "Personality" to those who have read Palmer and Wells) in 324 and 328 is the country facet; it is clearly unhelpful to collocate this book with books on, say, elections to the American House of representatives, simply because they both refer to lower houses.

5. A trap for the unwary is the style of index entry for House of Commons and for Parliament. Both these are *persons* (albeit corporate persons) and so that entries by and about them will file together in a combined Author and Subject index the style of heading must be the same when subject (as here) as when author. Hence, Great Britain. *Parliament* with reference from Parliament. This rule applies to subject headings in a dictionary catalogue also, of course.

6. *Suggested class nos. in other schemes*: BC: RdeaB or RDeaBL (deriving further details from RE) + Added entry RDeaYE—LC: JN503 + Added entry JN955—SC: L311 + Added entry L280V572—UDC: 328(410) + Added entry 324(410).

Q.3.

Classified file.

1. 323.4.

Caritat, Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas, *marquis de Condorcet*.

[L'esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain].

... Sketch for a historical picture of the progress of the human mind; translated by June Barraclough, with an introduction by Stuart Hampshire London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson. [1955].

xvi, 202 p. 17½ cm. (*Added t.p.*: Library of ideas [ed. by] Isaiah Berlin, Stuart Hampshire, Richard Wolheim).

At head of title: Antoine-Nicolas de Condorcet.

Bibliography.

First published by the French Republic at its own expenses in the Year III (1795). The only previous English translation also appeared, anonymously, in 1795.

Traces the progress of liberal democracy and human rights and sees their gradual victory over error, prejudice and superstition.

Author and title index.

2. Caritat, Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas, *marquis de Condorcet*.

[L'esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain].

Sketch for a historical picture of the progress of the human mind; translated by June Barraclough, with an introduction by Stuart Hampshire. [1955]. (Library of ideas). 323.4

3. Condorcet, Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas Caritat, *marquis de*, see Caritat, Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas, *marquis de Condorcet*.

4. Barraclough, June, *translator*.

see Caritat, Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas, *marquis de Condorcet*.

[L'esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain].

5. Hampshire, Stuart, *editor*.

see Caritat, Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas, *marquis de Condorcet*.

[L'esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain].

6. Library of ideas, *edited* by Isaiah Berlin and others.

Caritat, Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas, *marquis de Condorcet*.

[L'esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain].

Sketch for a historical picture of the progress of the human mind; translated by June Barraclough, with an introduction by Stuart Hampshire. [1955]. (Library of ideas) 323.4

7. Berlin, Isaiah, *editor* see Library of ideas, *edited* by Isaiah Berlin and others.

8. Hampshire, Stuart, *editor*.

see Library of ideas, *edited* by Isaiah Berlin and others.

9. Wolheim, Richard, *editor*.

see Library of ideas, *edited* by Isaiah Berlin and others.

Subject index (using chain procedure).

Democracy and human rights: Political science 323.4

Human rights: Political science	323.4
Rights, Human: Political science	323.4
Individual and State: Political science	323.4
State and individual	323.4
Political science	320

COMMENTS.

1. Students who follow the American rule for noblemen should make it clear to the examiner.

2. The insertion under the author heading of the original title as a "conventional title" ensures that all editions of the same work file together.

3. If the author's name is omitted from title description, as here, yet differs significantly from the form used in the heading, the discrepancy should be clarified by the "At head of title" note.

4. The Code gives no authority for naming the editors in the series note. But it is entirely consistent with the idea of full description in a main entry.

5. Series editions should always be given references, not added entries, which are absurdly extravagant.

6. In subject work the main problem is whether to place it under history of civilization (901) or under the more restricted theme implied by the transcript notes: "traces . . . progress of liberal democracy, establishes the rights of humanity . . ." Merrill's ruling, that a general subject treated with special reference to a part of that subject should go under the narrower subject, seems to apply here. Also, the fact that the author is a philosopher and the series a "Library of ideas," together with the general preference in Dewey for subordinating special history with its subject rather than putting it under general history suggests the latter, too. An added entry under 321.8 Democracy would also be justified—but the theory of human rights is wider than democracy and the index can cover the approach via this term.

7. Any students classifying this book at 194.9 (French philosophers) are classifying the author, not the subject—a common error in practical classification.

8. *Suggested class nos. in other schemes:* BC: RAG or LGC—LC: JC571 or CB27—SC: L021 or O003—UDC: 342.7 or 930.85.

Q.4.

Main entry.

1. Fisher, James, *editor*.

. . . Birds and beasts; edited by James Fisher and painted (in collaboration with Rowland Hilder) by Maurice Wilson. London, Phoenix house, ltd. [195 ?].

[48] p. col. illus., diags. 28 cm. (Shell nature studies).

Outline key diagrams accompany each illustration.

Emphasis is on the identification of birds, with brief notes on their habits, the countryside where they live, their food and animal companions. 598.2

Added entries and references (Author and title).

2. Hilder, Rowland, *illustrator* *see* Fisher, James, *editor*.

Birds and beasts . . .

2. Wilson, Maurice, *illustrator* *see* Fisher, James, *editor*.

Birds and beasts . . .

4. Shell nature studies.

Fisher, James, *editor*.

Birds and beasts; painted (in collaboration with Rowland Hilder) by Maurice Wilson. [195 ?]. 598.2

Added entries and references (subject).

5. Birds.

[entry as for 4]

Vertebrates	<i>see also</i>	Birds
Ornithology	<i>see</i>	Birds
Animals	<i>see also</i>	Birds
Zoology	<i>see also</i>	Birds
Beasts	<i>see</i>	Animals

COMMENTS.

1. A straightforward title. Another example of the Merrill rule cited after Q.3—so enter under Birds rather than Animals.

2. No mention is made of the birds being British, and students shouldn't assume this.

3. The linking references in Sears are straightforward. But the title gives a keyword (Beasts) which also needs to be incorporated.

4. *Suggested class nos. in other schemes:* BC: GX—LC: QL674—SC: F600—UDC: 598.2.

Q.5.

Main entry.

1. India. *Information and broadcasting, Ministry of.*

The eighth year. [] Ministry of information and broadcasting, Publications division, 1955.

[vi.] 3—234 p. 20½ cm.

Outlines the major achievements of the Central and State governments between April 1944 and March 1955, both in internal social and economic activities and in external affairs. 354.4

Added entries and references (Author and title).

2. Information and broadcasting, *Ministry of, India.*

see India. Information and broadcasting, Ministry of.

Added entries and references (subject).

3. India—Politics and government.

4. India—Government *see* India—Politics and government.

5. India—History, Political *see* India—Politics and government.

6. Government.

For the government of an individual country, state, etc., *see* name of country or state with the sub-division *Politics and government*, e.g., India—Politics and government.

7. Political science *see also* names of countries with the sub-divisions *Constitution* and *Politics and government*, e.g., India—Politics and government.

8. Politics, Practical *see also* names of countries, cities, etc., with the sub-division *Politics and government*, e.g., India—Politics and government.

COMMENTS.

1. Straightforward. The references in Sears are to be found, of course, under U.S.

2. Any student classifying this at 342.54 Constitution of India is confusing constitutional structure with the administrative actions of the government.

3. History of India, 954, is too wide here. This deals quite specifically with one particular aspect of Indian Institutions.

4. *Suggested class nos. in other schemes:* BC: RDqG. U or RHqU or (if subordinated to Social-Political history) ON,B,U—LC: JQ226—SC: L295P683—UDC: 354(54) "1954/5."

Postscript

I notice that on page vi of the *Examination Supplement* of the *Assistant Librarian* for September, 1956, that a "model" definition of the word *glossary* appears as follows:—"A list of unusual or special words used in a book. It may appear at the front or back of the volume. It is not to be confused with an index." And that is all.

This definition is incomplete and should fail a student on this section of the question. According to the O.E.D. a glossary is, "A collection of glosses, list and *explanations*, of abstruse, obsolete, etc., terms, partial dictionary." The whole point of a gloss is that it comments, explains and defines. The physical arrangement of the words in a list, alphabetically otherwise, is purely for convenient reference.

DOROTHEA SCOTT, *Hong Kong University Library.*

cil. Mr. Tomlinson expressed regret that the Presidential Address for 1956 should have appeared in the *Assistant* only in 1957. The Editor's unperturbed air was explained by Mr. Tynemouth's admission that he had only been able to forward the copy to the Editor in "the last quarter of the year" in time perhaps for the December issue, but that, the Past President felt, "had a certain unity."

The Education Committee report was received amicably enough, only because a promised procedural battle was postponed until the Honorary Treasurer pronounced the findings of the Finance Committee. Mr. Thompson's lecture to the Council on the need for professional librarians to do all they can to help in tuition for the new Teacher/Librarian certificate was brought to a halt when he was informed that he had been appointed to a sub-committee to consider a correspondence course for this purpose. Bitten, the biter subsided into silence.

With the coming of the Finance Committee's report, routine was finally driven to the wall, and the promised procedural battle ensued. Following a protest by some Sheffield tutors, the Education Committee had again recommended to the Finance Committee that full fares of all correspondence course tutors be paid to attend the national conference of tutors in May. Resolutely the Finance Committee had reaffirmed their original decision to pay fares only above £1. The President, having ruled discussion on this out of order under Standing Orders, promptly found said Standing Orders suspended on a motion from the floor. A close vote and a recount confirmed the Finance Committee decision, and Mr. Atkinson's request for a division was denied. Tea came to allow the President her second, if not her third, breath.

After this second interval the meeting passed serenely to its end. The draft Annual Report was received with only minor amendments. Arrangements were made for the Presidential Induction and the A.G.M. in London in May, and Mr. Thompson was invited to address the A.A.L. Session at the L.A. Conference in Harrogate next September.

Following reports by our representatives on the L.A. Council and committees, Mr. Tomlinson tried to persuade the Council to ask the L.A. to prepare a "job classification" of posts in libraries. This was understood and misunderstood in so many and various ways that Council decided to think again in March, and in the meantime asked Mr. Tomlinson to provide them with a memorandum for discussion.

The President ended as she began the meeting, by astonishing the Council with her timing. The Council rose at 4.55—the earliest for many years. With a body like the A.A.L. Council, only efficient chairmanship can yield such results.

Some critics have taken satisfaction in the decreasing number of quotations in the last few issues of these notes. This has not been deliberate, but wit for a few months seems to have been as tightly rationed as petrol. The New Year has brought a fresh supply, intentional and otherwise, and like the *Observer*, we are again able to offer some—

SAYINGS OF THE WEEK

"I don't understand what Mr. Jones means, but I'm prepared to resent it." (W. G. Thompson, replying to comments by A. C. Jones on the Yorkshire week-end school reported in the Annual Report).

"Maybe it's because you're a Londoner." (P. D. Pocklington, without music, inviting Miss Willson to give her Presidential address in London).

"If a majority supports Mr. Phillips it would be a simple majority." W. Tynemouth, during the procedural fracas reported above).

"The Presidential dangle" (Honorary Treasurer, recommending insurance of the Presidential badge and chain).

ERIC MOON.

The A.A.L. Council would welcome assistants who would like to attend one of its meetings. This year the Council meets at Chaucer House at 1.30 p.m. on Thursday, 14th March, 16th May, 12th September, and 14th November. As space in the "public gallery" is limited, will members wishing to attend please give as much notice as possible to the Honorary Secretary, Kensington Central Library, London, W.8.

Librarianship On The March

— or walking backwards ?

A report and some reflections on a recent talk by Dr. Ranganathan

By Brian Selby, Manchester Public Libraries

Dr. Ranganathan impressed me as being a virtuoso librarian, a man of deep awareness of the possible brilliance of the future of humanity who believes that librarianship has an important place in that future.

He dealt mainly with the problems of communication, claiming, firstly, that the library profession had not catered for what he called "the lower I.Q's." He pointed out that these people are not used to picking up ideas from the printed page and that the profession should investigate their capacity to absorb ideas by reading so as to ascertain whether or not there is any need for a reform in the printed book. Experience in India was that even high I.Q's. had difficulty in benefiting from books because they were not used to reading as a means of communication of ideas. Dr. Ranganathan suggested that this could perhaps be overcome by providing profusely illustrated books, letterpress being not more than one quarter of the contents. Obviously the visual impact on the senses of the pictures in such a book would reinforce the impression on the brain of the intellectual image obtained by reading the letterpress. The publishing over the last fifty years of books specially written and attractively produced for children proved that the special class of literature he suggested for the lower I.Q's. could be developed.

His next point was that literacy does not ensure that all the members of a literate population have the reading habit. This is the job of the librarian, to help the lower I.Q's who have found their way into our libraries to find the literature they need. But in addition to safeguarding literacy and instilling the reading habit, the librarian has a position as the custodian of the leisure of the community. Industrial society has given the people more and more leisure, and the librarian has to take part in the essential task of helping men to use their free time. Finally on this topic, Dr. Ranganathan reminded us that automation is going to create still more leisure for the people and consequently a greater need for the librarian's participation in the work of assuring the proper use of that leisure.

Dr. Ranganathan introduced his remarks on communication in science and industry by showing that the increasing world population makes "research leading to intensive use of natural resources a matter of life and death, and the profession should help in the making known and exploitation of the results of research." The rapid development of nuclear energy compared with the slow progress in the early years of electric power has been aided by the vastly improved documentation services of to-day.

The world of research is the world of the micro-thought unit: the single article, not the bound volume of a periodical; the single chapter, not the whole book. Even a man of genius would now find it difficult to keep pace with all the published literature of research, and a new function of librarianship which emerged 20 years ago is the organization of micro-thoughts so that they can be passed to the right worker at the right time. Many new techniques are needed to achieve this organization, but their development was negligible before the formation of

F.I.D., which has since been forging ahead with this work of organizing the results of research.

But in addition to the research scientist there is the problem of communication for the worker on the production line. Dr. Ranganathan suggested that this problem also might be solved by the creation of a special class of literature, designed for the man at the bench. "The march of library service demands different techniques."

Dr. Ranganathan maintained that the L.A. examinations should direct professional education towards equipping young librarians to face new problems, such as those of the lower I.Q's. and the man at the factory bench, and to provide differing kinds of library service to meet the demands caused by social changes, such as the increase of leisure. He seemed doubtful about the inclusion of the history of literature in a modern professional examination syllabus.

There must be more documentation services for industry, he said, but "we have to struggle for finance. It is not fair to let county and borough library services be financed only by the local rate. The local rate cannot bear the burden which the library requires." The local authorities' argument that to accept financial aid from the Exchequer would be to lose their local freedom is not valid. The universities had used a similar argument against the formation of the University Grants Committee, but to-day U.G.C. is in operation and the universities still retain their freedom.

Dr. Ranganathan sees far into the future of librarianship. "I am an optimist and know that humanity will always move forward," he said. He urged us to "give up conservatism in library matters, which are of enormous importance and may decide the future of humanity. If we stay put where our ancestors left us, we regress in public opinion. Instead of bungling along as we have done in the past, we must look ahead to social changes so that we can come forward with the right kind of library service."

Dr. Ranganathan's talk may have seemed a little too high flown for the average assistant working in a branch library where the service often seems to be walking backwards instead of marching forward, but the questions which this very distinguished visitor raised can be applied to every library system in the country. Can we conscientiously believe that we are instilling the reading habit into the lower I.Q's. and assuring the proper use of the leisure of the people by providing libraries which are often nothing more than collections of entertainment reading? Are the services to science and industry of the giants of Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield and the rest so good that the librarians of smaller places can sit back and say what a splendid job the nation's public libraries are doing for industry? Apparently not, for already Dr. Urquhart of D.S.I.R., seems to have cast aside the majority of public libraries in his efforts to establish a national scientific information service, especially for the smaller firms which cannot afford libraries of their own.

Dr. Ranganathan's remarks were very relevant to the contemporary situation of British public librarianship, which is apparently faced with breaking away from the parent local authorities so that a national library service with a high national standard of service and with national finance may be created. But before this move is made the profession has to decide to what extent and by what methods it intends to meet the changing demands of the nation for library service. The implications of this distinguished visitor's talk should stimulate the reconstruction of our professional aims and methods which is the essential prelude to the continuation of the march of library service in this country.

EILEEN COLWELL

"HOW I BECAME A LIBRARIAN"

Reviewed by Alan Morley

Miss Colwell, Children's Librarian of Hendon, needs no introduction in Youth Libraries circles. She is one of the pioneers of children's librarianship in this country as it is known to-day, and a founder-member of the Youth Libraries Section. One has only to glance through the 1937-38 volume of *The Junior Bookshelf* to find accounts of the formation and first meetings of the Association of Children's Librarians, of which Miss Colwell was the first secretary. In 1938 the Association had sixty-four members. Now as the Youth Libraries Section it has nearly a thousand, a strength that says much for the energy, enthusiasm and foresight of its pioneer members.

Miss Colwell is the daughter of a Methodist minister, and her youth was spent in travelling from circuit to circuit, living in houses that looked as if they had been furnished from jumble sales. Miss Colwell had, and has, two passions—literature and work with children. When she left school she was determined to enter librarianship and won a scholarship to the London University School of Librarianship—the first scholarship for librarianship training to be given by the West Riding Education Committee. After qualifying she found it no easy matter to secure a post—most librarians were still wary of college trained librarians. At last she obtained a "middle-senior" appointment with a North-country authority at the princely salary of thirty shillings a week. After months of general

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 1957 Annual General Meeting of the A.A.L. will be held at Chaucer House, on Wednesday, 15th May. Notices of motion for this meeting must be submitted in writing, signed by two members of the Association, to reach me within fourteen days of the publication of this notice. If a member is proposing to submit an amendment to the Rules of the Association, such amendment must be signed by at least ten members.

E. E. MOON,

Honorary Secretary.

CENTRAL LIBRARY,
KENSINGTON HIGH STREET,
LONDON, W.8.

lending library work she was sent to a branch which had a children's library. Now she could put her long-cherished dreams into operation. Story hours, a bright colourful library, extra-library activities! So much for initiative. Her chief, on his next tour of inspection, took one look at her laboriously-designed posters and ordered her to take them down "as they were not an improvement." Story hours, too, were forbidden—even if there was time to spare there was plenty of work that needed doing! Even the right of book selection was denied her.

It was, therefore, with a feeling of escape that Miss Colwell applied for, and was appointed to, the post of school library organiser for Hendon. In theory this was only a part-time and temporary appointment. In practise it was to be her life's work. Starting from scratch, and with the help of an enthusiastic chairman, Miss Colwell built up a stock sufficient for centres at seven schools. From this small beginning grew the present children's service at Hendon. At Hendon, the schools' service was inaugurated before the formation of the adult libraries, so, as the only librarian employed by the authority, Miss Colwell found herself, at the age of 23, helping to "short list" her future chief librarian. A unique experience for any assistant!

Since then, Miss Colwell has built up an almost unrivalled reputation in children's librarianship. She has lectured, broadcast, advised publishers and has even taken part in an international story-telling convention, though unfortunately, no mention of this is made in her book.

It may be argued that this is too personal an account to be a good career book, there are few opportunities for pioneering in modern librarianship, and the book has only one short chapter on how young people can enter the profession to-day.

I think this matters little. Miss Colwell has managed to transmit her enthusiasm to her readers in a way that no work of the "text-book" type could hope to do. If it encourages young people to enter librarianship as a career rather than a means of merely earning a living, her trouble will have been more than repaid.

How I Became a Librarian is published by Nelson in the "Enterprise library" series. It is unfortunate that more enterprise was not shown over paper, format and binding, yet the book remains good value at 6s.

Bad Bard

61 By Ian Wilkes, Barking Public Library

There are, taking the widest view, four types of historical novel: the book, written in the past, that has become a period piece; a novel set in the past entirely; a novel that explores the past from a modern setting (outstanding in this field is Josephine Tey's *Daughter of Time*); and the book that uses an historical argument to influence the present.

John Appleby's *The Stuffed Swan* (Hodder and Stoughton, 11s. 6d.) is in this latter group and is concerned with the tired topic of "Who wrote Shakespeare?" The candidate, according to Mr. Appleby, is Queen Elizabeth I, but he makes very little effort to justify his selection: apart from the original "proof" offered of a scrap of a letter to W.S. from Elizabeth, saying that she wrote Hamlet—no further evidence is presented in the book: instead it becomes a hodge-podge of conflicting themes, most of them built on false premises. For example, assuming there to be incontrovertible proof that Elizabeth did write Shakespeare, then I cannot agree that the following hypotheses presented by Mr. Appleby are true:—

1. A publisher of the complete works of Shakespeare would stand to lose such a considerable amount of money that he would incept various forms of skulduggery to remove the evidence.
2. Stratford on Avon would be considered to be a fraud, all Stratfordians would be thrown out of work and the Memorial Theatre and all businesses connected with the Shakespeare legend would be closed.
3. To destroy the paper upon which the proof is based, after it had been widely publicized, photographed and authenticized, would render the matter null and void.
4. Supporters of Bacon, the Earl of Oxford, the Earl of Rutland and Shakespeare—as author of the works—would band together to sabotage this destroyer of their own theories.
5. Daily papers, from the *Mirror* upwards, would give the discovery the greatest amount of publicity ("a double inside column with a leggy photograph in the *Mirror* to a sober three inches on the home page of *The Times*") for about a fortnight, and then let the subject drop entirely the moment the paper was lost.
6. Feminists all over the country would postulate the theorem that: "Elizabeth wrote Shakespeare; Shakespeare was a genius; therefore Elizabeth was a genius; therefore all women are geniuses; therefore Beethoven's mum wrote the symphonies.

On the credit side is the slender recommendation that the Baconian and the Henry-de-Vere-Earl-of-Oxford-ian theories are given a fair statement, the latter quite handsomely (the Marlowe theory is dismissed as ridiculous).

The fundamental fault with Mr. Appleby's book—apart from the mainly literary quibbles above—is that he never decides what genre he is engaged upon; his work has strands of romantic interest, historical argument, adventure, fantasy and humour so intertwined as to make the book dull to devotees of any of the individual aspects.

From a student's essay: This subdividing of the various subjects in each group divides by stages until no further division is possible, and the final object consists of itself alone.

ASSISTANCE TO STAFF—2

Tony Shearman

Although writers of letters to newspapers and magazines are only a small proportion of those who are continually proclaiming their intention to write or their opinion that someone ought to write, nevertheless it is surprising how many "ordinary citizens" daily send in their considered judgements to one editor or another; the kind of people, it may be fairly safely stated, who are users of public libraries, constitute the group that keeps editors happy with unpaid copy. From their homes these would-be legislators dictate economic and foreign policies—in print only. Local weekly papers frequently provide space for this material where the town councillor and the school teacher can be seen lashing each other with their pens, each week getting more and more purple in their prose. To feed this conflict, the protagonists need facts—often urgently.

It may be that they will come to you, each smarting under the others verbal scorn, and panting to return with a subtle and unanswerable point the next week.

"As soon as man thinks about anything that matters, he must get an Atlas." So said Rand McNally (or apparently so since it is quoted on the title page of his *Cosmopolitan World Atlas* (1953) and is not given in any dictionary of quotations). However the information Man finds in the Atlas he gets is likely to be out of date, particularly in an economic atlas; and the atlases whose description follows should be thought of primarily as valuable for the way the information is presented: only this way is there compensation for out-of-dateness. The little dots, squares, stars, etc. which the economic cartographer employs are chiefly useful for showing your impatient letter writer what he wants to know, speedily and graphically. For example, in one of the atlases he will see at a glance just where in the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe by means of a small black circle, Uranium (incl. pitchblende, etc.) is produced. Nothing is more calculated to confound an opponent than a statement such as "It is well known of course that Uranium (incl. pitchblende, etc.) is being produced in Russia at Ukhta and Cluj . . ."

The atlases are Humlum, Johannes (you can't forget the name once seen and you may have a tendency to repeat it to yourself over and over again, especially on long train journeys), *Atlas of Economic Geography*, 4th ed., 1955, 15s. and OXFORD *Economic Atlas of the World*, O.U.P., 1954, 30s. This second atlas is being expanded on a regional basis, one volume having so far appeared: *U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe*, O.U.P., 1956.

Humlum was intended to be in two volumes: Vol. I, maps; Vol. II, illustrated text; but the second volume may not be published until the fifth edition appears. The other three editions were in Danish; this edition is in German, French and English as well as its original language. Statistical data which is very brief, applies to one of more of the years 1950-1953. The date appears at the top of each page. For the U.S.S.R. and some Eastern countries, statistics for 1938 or 1934-8 have been used, and the expanded Oxford atlas mentioned above is obviously to be preferred. Both the projection and the scale are inferior to the Oxford atlases, but on the other hand there are large scale inset maps which "blow up" a crucial area with considerable illumination; and facts which are conveyed by tables in the Oxford atlases are shown by map in Humlum. For example, Humlum gives the world distribution of the

production of coffee and also world import and export; the Oxford atlas gives only production by map. Incidentally, what looks like an exclamation mark over Ireland in Humlum's inset map, is a dot with a figure one over it to show that Ireland imports 1,000 metric tons. In Humlum you can *see* that the U.S.A. consumes 1,162,000 metric tons of coffee; you can *read* in the Oxford atlas that the U.S.A. drinks 40 per cent. of the world's coffee. So for speed and graphic presentation, Humlum is useful (though valuable space is wasted retailing the same facts four times, in different languages); for fuller information and greater accuracy, the Oxford atlas is superior.

The OXFORD *Regional Economic Atlas—the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe* has a comprehensive list at the front ("Books of Reference") covering the countries included in the atlas. Unlike its parent, the text is placed after the map to which it refers and not separately at the end. There are three main parts: General reference maps, Topic maps, i.e. showing where Uranium (incl. pitchblende, etc.), is produced, and Gazetteer. The figures used are for the year 1954, or 1953 where later figures are not available.

N.B.—If you can actually LOOK AT THE BOOK sometime, my purpose will have been achieved.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LIBRARY EDUCATION

A conference for tutors of all kinds will be held at Chaucer House on the week-end 4th—5th May, 1957.

It will be arranged by the S.C.E.L. (London Region) and the A.A.L.; its object is to promote discussion on all forms of library tuition and education.

The programme will include papers on the library schools, part-time tuition, and correspondence courses. There will also be sessions on the basis of subject taught and social activities. The conference fee is 7s. 6d.

All tutors, past and present, are invited. The full programme and application forms are available from H. G. W. Fodder, F.L.A., Hon. Secretary-Treasurer, S.C.E.L., Ealing Central Library, Walpole Park, London, W.5.

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Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians
(Section of the Library Association)

EDITOR: W. G. SMITH.

Westminster Public Libraries, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.

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APRIL, 1957

THE COMPLEAT LIBRARIAN THOUGHTS FOR THE CONFERENCE

By R. C. Bengé

Why are librarians such distracted desperate creatures? Indirectly the A.A.L. Conference this month will be dealing with this familiar question, but it will all be wrapped up in terms of personality factors, hierarchies and whether lines of responsibility should be vertical or horizontal; or in things beyond our control such as the mystical matter of status and the obtruse calculus of incentives and rewards. Here we propose to offer suggestions in a more homely fashion.

The textbooks have been intent on proving that librarianship is an honourable calling (how could it be otherwise?); they have protested almost too much about the importance of our work; they have implied that the qualities must border on the heroic. The following is an anatomy of our heroism.

The librarian hero will require dragons for his progress and the pilgrim his obstacles. Since the most terrible ones are disguised and unforeseen, the unwary recruit should be forewarned. We need not bother with those sensitive souls who, feeling that they will be blasted by the rude words of the world, have foolishly crept into libraries only to find that the world is there also. Assume that there is a true hero who looks up his destiny in the books. There he will learn that he must become administrator, humanist, scientist, scholar, bookman, bureaucrat and welfare worker. This will confuse him, but he need not play all these parts all the time, and consoled by this, our recruit will face happily his early trials. These will consist of the long monotony "on" the counter—then the important pettifoggery of cataloguing and the acute anxiety of classification; then sooner or later the controlled hysteria of reference work (oh what am I looking for now?) But being young, he will survive these and other trials and eventually as is the way with heroes, will reach what is commonly called the top.

These duties, like all specialities, will produce several sorts of monster: what are their characteristics? The first and most noticeable one is that we run to extremes. The over dedicated battle in vain with indifference; some with imagination and no sense confront others with ability and no vision. A surfeit of conscience, an obsession with detail, and inability to delegate are supported by their opposites: the mild and the meek and the too tolerant bow down to petty tyrants. Then there is the intolerable thing that our conservatism is produced by the accumulations of time which pile up around us so that the introduction of a type-writer or a new pen nib bring havoc and confusion. Thirdly for these and other reasons whenever we try to put our houses in order, we find

separate apartments which fuddle our activities. In one musty attic we keep our professional dreams—and polish from time to time an old and battered halo: but in the living room we get on with our job. We must warn our recruit of the perils of knocking down walls.

But these are obvious matters. Let us consider another factor which may turn queer the tender minded. The librarian in his library faces forever a microcosm of the world. Compare his with other callings. Your journalist lives constantly with petty public events or with the vaster world of telegrams and anger, but these are his daily bread and he does not mind. The impact of other people's lives will affect *directly* your lawyer, shop-keeper, publican or doctor, but all of them can (and do) remain semi-literate. But in a unique fashion the librarian is exposed to several kinds of reality at once. The great mutations of the world take place within his walls; the spirits of the age (and every other age) breathe over him their alarming breath, while that other one, the owl spirit of Minerva, sits above his chair and broods on the record of the past which he must collect and preserve—the history of the crimes and follies of mankind. Past—present and future are all one to him, like the Lady of Shallott, he sits and stares at—not one—but countless mirrors. To the strong-minded, this will be exciting, but even he will sometimes feel that he is on the wrong side of the mirror and at other times catch glimpses of that appalling object—himself. And it is no use his pulling faces like a Kingsley Amis hero. This is his challenge, his particular glory; there are too many books.

Next there is the special trap set for the literary ones. Some of them became librarians because they dreamt of writing—but our libraries produce librarians and not writers, so that if so many librarians write badly, it is no great matter. It is proper that the hopes of our writer manqués should vanish as fast as the dust collects on their half-finished novels. Stanley Snaith is a poet, but his prose betrays his unease as bibliothekar: John O'Leary puts on his splendid act, but it has to be in his annual report and somehow the real O'Leary's dead and gone. We have promising poets in Philip Larkin and Elizabeth Jennings, but they are yet young. Our recruit should be warned that he will be fully exercised in helping other people to read, to study, to write—he will not have time to do these things himself.

Finally the recruit should be warned about the tactics of evasion. One way out is to pretend you are not really a librarian at all: this is a resort to primitive magic and bound to fail. There are those who were true librarians once, but they masquerade as actors, stockbrokers, technicians or butchers; parading as happy pigs, they revel in their role of *hommes moyen sensuelles*, but life catches up with them; nemesis arrives in the shape of a migraine—an ulcer. Truth must prevail.

We have now answered half of our question. If you are not convinced, examine the careers of the great librarians of the past where these traits, developed by similar situations will be found writ large. The other half of the answer is simple. All specialised activity produces its special peculiarities which are superimposed on original idiosyncrasies. If you feel alarmed, the first time you visit a conference of librarians, then calm yourself by attending a gathering of bank clerks or teachers or hatters or women politicians. You will then discover *we are human, after all*. We can therefore happily cultivate our oddities, but not if we allow them to cancel out each other. Our cards of identity must be drawn up so that we know who we are: this is a tall order for the conference.

* * * *

THE PRIVILEGED READER

An excerpt from a letter received by Margaret Cook, a pupil at Ealing School of Librarianship, from her father, Henry Garnett, a Midland writer.

. . . . During the afternoon I had occasion to call in the Birmingham Reference Library. It was just one of my awkward questions and as I had no slip of paper in any hand I was ignored! Minute after minute went by until a full quarter of an hour had passed. "Ho!" said I to myself, said I, "Am I to be treated like a commercial traveller who has forgotten his little bag of samples. Do these upstarts think I want to sell a Hoover? Or brushes for cleaning the books?" And I looked at the horde of junior assistants and thought I had never seen such an unprepossessing lot of nincompoops. The men were slack-lipped and low-browed with a definite long-armed simian look about them. The women were flat-chested, untidy about the hair, round shouldered, surly and quite distressing in every way. I almost walked out and sent you a telegram ordering you to abandon a library career forthwith and take up a position in the attendant's cubicle of the underground ladies' lavatories.

At long last one of the male assistants—or so I assumed as he had egg on his waistcoat—ceased giving a spirited performance of one of the three wise monkeys of Japan and approached me with a scowl. I put my question and he disappeared. In due course he returned, festooned with cobwebs, and said that quite a little research would be involved and would I agree to the answer being posted to me. I agreed and he produced a complicated form.

"Name?" he asked bluntly.

"Henry Garnett," said I.

He laid down his inefficient Biro. "But I know that name," he said, and looked up at me with a hang-dog expression. Suddenly his shapeless features widened and became firm in a smile. He stood up and bowed from the waist.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said. "You are Mr. Garnett, the author, aren't you? I ought to have recognised you from your pictures in the newspapers. I'll deal with your question straight away."

He departed and I thought his back looked like that of a youthful Hermes in flannel trousers.

It seemed so short a time that I waited after that. The female assistants flitted from stack to stack with the grace and figures of Miss Monroe, and whereas a few moments before, the readers at the long tables had been entirely niggers and the bastards of niggers, they were now the hosts of heaven—with, of course, a couple of coloured gentlemen . . .

—This is through the eyes of a member of our massive public—a privileged one, it seems. What vision does the unprivileged member walk out with, I wonder.

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CALLANDER of CROYDON

A query caused a queue to form at both counters of a Coulsdon and Purley Branch. The single assistant on duty working hard to clear the incomers was startled by the crunch on a date-label behind him. Looking round, he found Mr. Callander, Chief of the neighbour borough of Croydon, gaily wielding the date-stamp. The incident is typical of the refreshing absence of superciliousness in one of our senior chief librarians. Continuing his pursuit of his predecessors, your editor visited Mr. Callander, who edited this journal from 1930 to 1933, and was entertained to nearly four hours of sparkling talk. The following does not purport to be his exact words, but Mr. Callander has kindly checked the copy and agrees that it represents his views.

Fiction has a Purpose

THE TIMES has recently suggested that public libraries should not stock fiction by living authors. Any comment?

It is wrong to dismiss fiction as escapist. Novels can provide enlightenment and information, sometimes to a greater extent than non-fiction. They are a means of communication with other ways of life; they reveal the different attitudes of other social and age groups. They have a proper and important place, therefore, in a public library. On the other hand some novels have nothing positive to offer. People may be better off reading them than smoking hashish, robbing banks, or beating wives, but they are nothing to do with the public library. The library is entitled to state its terms of reference and there is no more reason for the public library to be all things to all men than there is for, say, the British Museum which is also supported from public funds.

You once contributed to the ASSISTANT an annual review of fiction. What do you think of the "new movement" of Kingsley Amis, John Wain, etc.?

Damn good. I approve of anyone who is anti-pomposity, who pricks bladders—even when it means that I am the one who gets deflated.

You once criticised Southport library for not reserving fiction. It still doesn't do so. What do you think now?

Too many libraries have an artificial distinction between fiction and non-fiction, artistically and morally. I think that the distinction reflects a kind of priggish puritanism which thinks it sinful to enjoy one's self. I don't think fiction reading is sinful, and I have never felt that I have any mission to improve my fellow sinners. As a matter of practice, as distinct from do-gooding, if you don't reserve fiction, getting a particular novel is nothing but a lucky dip and it is always thoroughly embarrassing to the staff to have to confess to a reader that there is no way of ensuring that he can get a particular book known to be in stock. I prefer not to put my staff to enforcing a rule which the reader can see is indefensible. In practice, in every library where such a rule applies, fiction is reserved for a privileged few. This is inevitable, since if you make unreasonable rules, the staff will break them—it would be very awkward for the Chief Librarian if they didn't.

Examination Mania

What do you think of the examination syllabus?

My main impression is that students are asked to deal with unreal and artificially inflated subjects. A lot of minor techniques, bogus philosophies and theories seem to me to have been made into examination subjects merely for the sake of having examinations. The worst example of this is the theory of classification which has been talked up, written up, and blown up with a load of gas. Ranganathan, Wells and Palmer are the main culprits. An intelligent person fit for a senior post in a library ought to be able to apply a classification scheme in a couple of days by reading the preface and studying the schedules. (At this point, Mr. Callander delivered himself of an intricate and lengthy argument for defining levels of required proficiency in such crafts as cataloguing, classification in the neo-Wellsian phase of librarianship, and examining proficiency at these levels).

The administration examination should set out to find whether the candidate has grasped the principles of administration up to the level of responsibility which he might be expected to attain after passing the examination. To examine in this subject is difficult because administration is mainly an attitude of mind. The tendency of tutors to teach details of heating, lighting, ventilation, and so on is a symptom of the incurable passion of librarians for meddling in other people's business. In fact, it is no business of the librarian to plan and equip libraries; it is his job to formulate his requirements for a library, but it is an architect's job to furnish what the librarian calls for. When I was an examiner in this subject, I tried not to set papers on such details and hope it will not be done in future. The tutor and students are just wasting time if they are compelled to attempt examinations concerned with other people's jobs.

The Final examination should not be anything for which formal study and tuition is the key to a pass, but should be a test of mental calibre, aptitude and experience, and development. There should be an interview, a thesis (or evidence of good practical work), and one paper for which it would be useless to study, but which revealed the quality of the candidate, and which would really test his "mature" judgment.

In 1933 you complained of "the damnable belief that libraries and librarians must be neutral, emasculated, playing for safety all the time. The theory of respectable neutrality has done us immense harm." Have we improved in the last twenty years?

I have come to believe that all libraries are a projection of the librarian's personality. All good libraries are different because the good librarian will follow his personal pillar of fire without worrying whether it leads him along the righteous paths of the textbook, and without bothering what the rest of the library world thinks. On the other hand the moribund library is generally the reflection of a moribund librarian. It may, of course, be just the right library for the community which owns it.

Would national standards and government aid help the moribund libraries?

No, poor libraries are the result of poor librarians and a "don't care" attitude of the public. This would not be changed by government aid. In any case, a uniform standard is impossible. People who live in the country usually do so from choice and, just as they forgo easy access to theatres and art galleries, so they must forgo a first-class library

service. I feel that we librarians are apt to forget that communities have a right to decide what sort of library they want and that they can get themselves good libraries if they *want* them.

Professional Nudgers

What about publicity?

There is an awful lot of bad publicity still being produced. Publicity is a question of nudging people in a certain direction and most of us have not the ability or resources to compete with the professional nudgers. A great deal of time is wasted in producing publicity material merely because other people do it. The library periodical should be undertaken with caution because when inspiration and imitation run dry, as tends to happen to amateurs, the later results tend to be rather dreary. The best form of public relations is to create the more-than-satisfied reader. (This last sentence summarises discreetly a lengthy passage in which Mr. Callander gave his views on "public relations" with some force and venom. We were too stunned to take full notes, but Mr. Callander does not challenge our recollection that the final bars of the fugue were "professional lying, face-saving, covering-up and excusing".)

Are you abolishing the Browne charging system?

Yes. The central library has long queues, particularly on Saturdays, which I think will be largely abolished by introducing photocharging. At the moment five full-time staff are employed on the ordinary processes of charging and discharging, excluding shelving, in the central library, and photocharging will be justified if it reduces the man-hours involved on this task. I like to use machines, not people, to perform mechanical tasks. I considered the alternative of token charging, but its weakness seems to be its abandonment of control of the books. The public are likely to realise this after a time and losses will be heavier than I can face.

What are your current thoughts on catalogues?

The ideal is a union catalogue at each service point. In practice and with present techniques, this results in catalogues of appalling size and a disproportionate amount of time spent at every branch in keeping them up to date. I experimented with a catalogue in book-form produced photographically, but this has been abandoned as it was not found possible to bring out supplements quickly. A pity, because it was a beautiful catalogue, but it was never up-to-date. I am now using B.N.B. cards and concentrating resources on a central union catalogue, supplemented by good bibliographical aids, which will be staffed at all times so that branch libraries may obtain their requirements quickly by telephone. For non-B.N.B. books, entries will be made by the quickest available method (an entry from a publishers' catalogue, for example, might be cut out and pasted on a catalogue card and it will be if this will give us an entry in the shortest time).

I feel that the cataloguing problem in libraries is not yet solved, and I want to experiment further. This is the sort of thing that ought to be done by the L.A.'s Research Committee, because there is a limit to how far one can go alone. That committee seems, however, completely ineffective at organising research and experiment, and there is no organisation bringing together individual librarians interested in a specific problem to pool their resources, ideas and experience. What P.A.T.R.A. does for the printing industry, the Research Committee should be doing for librarians.

Compulsory Membership of the Library Association

How would you make the L.A. an effective body?

At present assistants are press-ganged into the L.A. because they cannot take examinations without being members. These people are not ready to be members of a professional association and their reluctant presence weakens the L.A. There is no reason why the Association should not conduct examinations for non-members. The L.A. could then become a professional institute admitting only persons with appropriate qualifications and experience (no institutional members). As such it would be a powerful and influential body. At present its opinions are discounted because they depend to a large extent on the votes of immature assistants; responsible opinion being outnumbered by examination candidates whose sole reason for membership is that it is economically necessary for them to take the examinations.

I regret the tendency to sectionalise the L.A., as, for example, in the plea for a Municipal Libraries Section. The claim that non-public librarians are at a disadvantage is a parrot-cry; in what way do they suffer? Librarianship is one job, not many, and a good administrative librarian of one kind of library can surely appreciate the problems of any other type. Wells and Foscett have proved it.

If your scheme for a professional institute were adopted, what would happen to the A.A.L.?

It would re-form as an independent body or disappear altogether. Better for it to disappear than to exist as a dead horse propped up by L.A. examination regulations and flogged along by a few enthusiasts. But would it disappear? I don't think so and it would be a lot healthier.

Gramophone Libraries Illegal?

Croydon's recent private bill contained a clause allowing the library to charge for the use of gramophone records. Do you think we should charge for all library services?

The clause did not become law because the Ministry of Education was against it. I still think, however, that the law should be changed—the concept of a free library is obsolete in present social conditions. The potentiality of public libraries is restricted by it. Books are essential and should be provided without charge, but there are many things the library could provide which are *desirable* but cannot really be called essential and which tend not to be provided because free public libraries cannot and should not provide them as free services. Therefore, do not provide them at the expense of the whole community, but at a cost to the minorities using them. Gramophone libraries are in this category as are picture loan schemes and specialised service to industry.

Some of the draft clause survived, though. It is often claimed that gramophone libraries are legally provided in libraries by virtue of the clause in the 1892 Act permitting specimens of art and science to be held. This is incorrect and Parliament would not have given to Croydon a library power which is already conferred by the existing Public Libraries Acts. A specimen is “an individual or part or piece from which the qualities of the class or whole may be judged.” Thus, it is permissible to have one gramophone record in order to show what all the others look like, but not to hold a whole collection for loan. That gramophone libraries are, therefore, *ultra vires*, is the only conclusion which can be drawn from the enactment of the clause in the Croydon Act which empowers Croydon to provide and lend gramophone records.

BIGGER NUMERICAL BLOOMERS ?

In February, W. Howard Phillips complained that the Dewey Classification was being subjected to the hocus-pocus of synthetic techniques and to transmogrification by B.N.B. classifiers. We print some readers' comments :—

From A. LI. Carver, Deputy City Librarian, Portsmouth.

Howard Phillips is right on the target in his *Think for Yourself—Again*. This present conception of classification helps no one, least of all the public. At its best it is the product of a cork-screw mind; at its worst—well, take the case of horse-shoeing. This seemed vaguely familiar to me, and blowing the dust from my memory, it came to me that Dewey himself had something about it in his Preface. (In my day we used to read and study this, in fairness to Melvil if nothing else. Does anyone bother now?). Sure enough, there it was, and still is, on page 32, para. 2. He not only warns against this modern heresy, but plainly states the correct place for the blacksmith's art. It was 682.1 thirty years ago; it still is. But do your readers realise the reasoning behind 636.1068531? Dobbin, friend of man, has been taken to the local branch of Freeman, Hardy and Willis and fitted up with a nice pair of suedes, with crepe soles, I suppose. Ever heard of checking back to the main head, or is that old-fashioned? Or perhaps it was not known that our shoes are a little different from a horse's. Ah well, I suppose we shall ultimately shelve everything alphabetically, and if no one knows the author of the book required, it will be just too bad. In the meantime, wasn't it Pope who said :—

Yet as a child, nor yet a fool to fame,
I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.
They certainly do!

From A. C. Foskett, Librarian, Research Division, Metal Box Co.

May I, as a student who took the A.A.L. Correspondence Course for Group A, be permitted to comment. It is hardly surprising that students who take this course misapply "synthetic" methods of classification, since the course scrupulously avoids teaching them anything about these methods. It can hardly be denied that the work of Ranganathan, whether one agrees with his conclusions or not, is a most important factor in the modern study of classification; yet the only reference to it in the course when I took it (1954) was to a chapter in the *Elements of Library Classification*, dealing with mnemonics. One might compare this with a course in Biology where the only reference to the work of Darwin was to a chapter in *The Voyage of the Beagle*.

But why should I endeavour to confound Mr. Phillips when his own examples do so much more thoroughly? To place "the lore of wishing wells" in Geology, or "diplomacy" in History, shows that the student has not studied the schedules. Similarly, to place "horse-shoeing" at 636.1068531 shows that the student has studied neither the schedules nor the index, since in this both 682.1 and 636.10834 are given; the latter would collocate it with horses as Domestic Animals, but Mr. Phillips ignores it. These are examples of bad classification, not misapplication of the synthetic method.

Does Mr. Phillips really think that 507 is a satisfactory place for "the history of scientific education in Sweden in the 19th century"? The student trying to find a place for this book may well be forgiven

for looking for something more to the point. In the same way, 809.94—the history of literature in Europe—can hardly be said to show the subject of a book on “the influence of the Bible . . .” These are criticisms of D.C., not of the students who struggle to apply it.

Mr. Phillips derides the thought of classifying *The Municipal Year Book* beyond the point 352.042; I, on the other hand, have yet to go into a library where it was not further classified. It is *not* placed with the general sequence, but with the reference or quick-reference collections; the sub-classification is none the less real for being implicit (by location, in the library) rather than explicit (by notation, in B.N.B.).

The time has come when, in all fairness to the student, the Registration course should be fundamentally revised to give an adequate explanation of the synthetic principle—not only as organised by Ranganathan; after all, this principle has been used in U.D.C. for many years in a disorganised way, and Bliss uses it in his Systematic Schedules. Synthetic principles are not so complicated as Mr. Phillips seems to think.

Let us by all means think for ourselves; in Mr. Phillips' case, perhaps thinking, like Charity, should begin at home.

From. P. D. Gann, Gloucestershire County Library.

W. Howard Phillips launches an attack on the B.N.B.'s “transmogrification” of Dewey. With the greatest respect, Mr. Phillips, I would like to make the following points:—

(1) Even in so essentially practical a classification scheme as that recently constructed by the Library of University College, London, where simple notation is an integral feature, it was found necessary to use finer sub-division in the compilation of the classified catalogue than in the shelving of the books. (*Journal of Documentation*, December, 1954, p. 184). As a result, classified catalogue cards bear two class marks: the shelf mark and the index mark.

(2) The B.N.B. has to deal with the total national output of books, not just the accessions of a medium sized library. This fact and the original plan to issue classified cumulations as well as cumulated indexes meant that if users were not to find themselves hunting for the specific subject under general headings, the classification had to be minute. But whatever type of library uses the B.N.B. service, it is not bound to use its classification. It can substitute 398.3 for 551.493980942, or the equivalent Brown, Bliss or U.D.C. class mark if it so desires. The fact that the B.N.B. has identified the subject of the book is of valuable assistance to the classifier even though a different number is used. The feature headings enhance this value.

(3) As one who has endured Library School classification classes, and (I am thankful to say) did not have to take the exam. twice, I would like to point out how helpful it is to classify books under the eye of a tutor and to argue the point with him if need be the same day and not by correspondence. When Ranganathan's Personality/Matter/Energy/Space/Time formula was put forward by Messrs. Palmer and Wells in their *Fundamentals of Library Classification*, it seemed to me, struggling as I then was with classification theory, to bring much-needed principles of order into a world in chaos. If the L.A. examiners dislike the application of these principles to the process of classifying by Dewey, they need only state that the B.N.B. is not the answer book to Registration Group A (iii).

(4) Mr. Phillips implied that the B.N.B. staff were not *practical librarians*. It seems to me that a group of librarians who can float a catalogue card service, whose equivalent in private enterprise America

is state supported, are nothing if not *practical*. But there are shades of meaning attached to the word, e.g. in the case of the builder who regarded himself as practical and architects as parasitic theorists in that excellent novel, Creswell's *Jago vs. Swillerton and Toomer* (823.91 or F).

From J. Mills, Lecturer in Classification, The Library School, North-Western Polytechnic, London.

Mr. Phillips complains of the "flagrant misuse" of the DC by students and at once proceeds to blame it all on the operation of the synthetic devices in that scheme, instead of on its obvious cause—the lack of understanding by some students of the principles of library classification. Does this reflect a confusion in Mr. Phillips' own mind?

It is suggested that the absurdities in the examples result from their being based on the PMEST formula. Since none of the examples remotely demonstrate an application of Ranganathan's five categories, this suggestion also serves only to confuse the issue. It might be noted here that the five categories are not primarily a formula for synthesis: they offer a guide to the order of citation of the elements in any compound subject and are relevant to any classification, with the exception, perhaps, of Brown's. Whether, for example, to classify a book on the Committee system in the House of Commons as Legislation—GB—Lower house—Committees, or as Legislation—Lower house—Committees—GB demonstrates the most fundamental problem in classification; in so far as use of the formula forces the student and practical classifier to realize it every time he classifies, it can only be welcomed by anybody interested in intelligent classification. Incidentally, since Mr. Phillips refers to "Wellsian phantasy," it may be noted that the consistency with which the classifiers of the BNB construct their class numbers and the clarity with which the order of division is manifested in them by means of feature words and verbal extensions is a major reason why the BNB is such a boon to students and teachers of classification.

Mr. Phillips' real criticism involves two quite distinct points, and these should be disentangled. Firstly, he evidently disapproves on principle of close classification. But while he is perfectly entitled to his opinion, students should not think it is more than that. The arguments against broad classification were given with force and clarity by Richardson 50 years ago and need not be repeated here, although with the huge increase in the printed record they are more valid than ever. So, to a student in the examination, a title *The Bible and European literature* poses the question of whether such a subject is sufficiently distinct from a general history of European literature as to warrant a distinct class number. To this question I would certainly reply "Yes" and Mr. Phillips, presumably "No." Luckily, the examination syllabus leaves the student in no doubt, since it instructs him clearly to classify closely where possible.

The interpretation of "possible" in this context is the second point in Mr. Phillips' criticism. It is undoubtedly possible for a student to construct absurd numbers, and as any teacher well knows there will always be some students who will produce them. But to suggest, as he does, that the examiners should not test a student's mastery of the moderate intricacies of number building in case they make a hash of it seems to reflect an extraordinary view of the function of an examination; it is like asking for approximate answers only in an arithmetic examination in case a student should be careless with his decimal fractions.

Number building is an integral feature of the DC and cannot be dissociated from it. Also, to test a student's discretion in the application of common sub-divisions is to test his grasp of the principles of classification, and is an important part of the practical examination. To take Mr. Phillips' first example, *Lore of wishing wells in England and Wales*: the chain of this number in the DC is Social sciences—Folklore—Wishing wells—England and Wales. Since the third link is not specifiable, the fourth link should not be specified either and the class number should be 398.3, not 398.30942. This demonstrates, of course, the old principle of division not making a leap. But Mr. Phillips would not test a student's grasp of it. Similarly, the chain of the third example, *Influence of the Bible on European Literature* is Literature—European—[in relation to] Bible. Both phases (Literature and Religion) are exactly specifiable and the relationship sign 0001 links them. The student must also know that, in the DC, a common sub-division added to a place number (here, Europe) requires an extra nought to allow for a period division, giving the correct number 809.940000122. Admittedly it is absurdly long: it is so because of Dewey's poor allocation of notation and his insistence on pure Arabic numerals for "maximum simplicity." Most classifiers would modify it in practice (e.g., to 809.94:22). But just as full code cataloguing is taught so that cataloguers, knowing the limits of full cataloguing, are better able to appraise the degrees and merits of "limited" cataloguing, so are classifiers taught the full range of the DC so that they are better able to modify it if necessary.

Mr. Phillips' anxiety lest a student should be tested too stringently has not so far extended to those students using other schemes. If he tried to apply his arguments to the application of, say UDC or the BC, their fundamental weakness would become even more apparent.

Your Letters

— split duties — readers' advisers — staff
— library schools — useful classification

The Virility of Librarians

In February Les Everard's article "In Defence of the Junior" attacked split duties, readers' advisers, and the lack of virility in male assistants.

Three hearty cheers for Les Everard! His article said much that has wanted an airing for a long time.

Split duties impart such a feeling of depression that they have to be endured to be imagined. I had six years of them; not the least depressing factor was the sight of thousands of people tripping home from work while I, poor unfortunate, made haste for the 5.30—8.30 p.m. stint.

The fact that libraries remain open to the public on Saturday afternoons dissuades many intending applicants to public library posts. Several of my colleagues past and present are keen rugger and soccer players and cricketers, too. They have waxed loud and long on the evils of Saturday working and were no worse librarians for that. Even every other Saturday free does not ensure a regular game with a good club. One has, more often than not, to make up the number for the Old Boys' Third XV. I believe that Glasgow Public Libraries have experimented with "shutting shop" on Saturdays and have not reported any adverse

effects. Let the Sassenachs do likewise. My advice to any keen sportsman is to find a job with a county library headquarters; I did, and now have opportunity for a game of rugger every Saturday in winter and cricket in summer. The libraries that remain open on Saturdays can be comfortably staffed by those who "clutch wildly at the counter" (Everard) at the mention of sport. They can have their symphony concerts and what-not later in the day.

The statement that three-quarters of the library profession are female women, the remainder male women, is also worthy of some consideration. In my capacity of relief librarian I happened one day recently to be restoring my tissues at the "local" in an outlying county district when a chap asked me what I did for a living (he'd been to a funeral by the way); I told him that I manned the caravan library on the car park adjacent to the pub, whereupon I was informed that I ought to be (1) down the mines, or (2) in the Army, and that an old woman of seventy could do the job. My first inclination was to knock his block off (I had completed my two years' "statutory" in the Far East), but reason prevailed and he *had* just been to a funeral.

I have been involved in similar discussions with colleagues (female) with whom I work, who never fail to express surprise at any man worthy of the name working in a library.

Apparently Cutter and cricket, Ranganathan and rugby are not every woman's idea of the complete librarian.

VINCENT FORSHAW,
Relief Librarian, Staffordshire County Libraries.

I am in complete agreement with Mr. Everard that split duties are wrong, but should like to point out that there *are* juniors who quite honestly prefer splits. They have been offered a choice of time-sheets, their opinions have been asked (and this was not done by "an elderly, imposing chief"), and their final choice was—split duties. Should Mr. Everard be sceptical as to the existence of such juniors, I can show him written proof both of their existence and of their opinions!

With regard to his idea of the readers' adviser, to a certain extent I have done that work, and wish to state (a) that I was never in the happy (?) position of sitting twiddling my thumbs, waiting for work—on the contrary; (b) nobody ever seemed to find me intimidating—and what makes Mr. Everard suppose that the readers' adviser must be elderly and forbidding? and (c) with regard to extra hands being withheld from the counter, surely it is helpful rather than otherwise if a separate counter is staffed to deal with the registration of new borrowers, and with enquiries? The readers' adviser is not some rare specimen with a "touch-me-not" air; he or she is simply a library assistant with a sound knowledge of the stock and a flair for dealing with people.

BARBARA J. COLLINS, *Portsmouth Public Library.*

Technical 6d. MONTHLY

BOOKGUIDE

DESCRIBES THE MONTH'S
NEW TECHNICAL BOOKS

April issue just out, lists 250 titles in 64 categories At Newsagents or by post 8d. (6 months 4/-) from 21 Lower Belgrave Street, London, S.W.1

The February *Assistant* was the best since 1955. It carried a profusion of good, meaty articles which made it worth more than the usual cursory glance. Mr. Shearman's series will be an excellent feature, and I hope that Mr. Millward's "Any ideas" suggestion is taken up. Library humour is, however, more doubtful.

How refreshing to find that our professional periodical is concerning itself more with what we do in libraries, and less with what we do in our committees, and think of ourselves! More libraries and less library politics!

In fact, I should be entirely satisfied if I could persuade you, Mr. Editor, to abandon typographical gymnastics with the heading.*

P. G. NEW, *Coulsdon and Purley Libraries.*

*We were not aware of them, but offer a first—and last—sample for Mr. New.—EDITOR.

Fairy Tales Corrupt ?

In the remarks in your February editorial relating to the L.A.'s *Books for Young People, Group I*, "confusion now hath (deliberately, perhaps?) made his masterpiece!"

Of course "cataloguing rules" can *not* "be shown to justify these pretences" which relate only to classification.

Is it not an excellent thing that classification has here achieved the desirable result of removing Fairy Tales from the Children's Fiction section? Are they really suitable children's light reading, or are they not rather a corrupting influence extolling, at the best, very doubtful ethical standards? Their main value is to anthropologists and psychologists. The other examples cited similarly show sensible, useful, classification. In any case the distinction between fiction and non-fiction is often a fine one as much so-called non-fiction has a fictional element in it (e.g. Biography).

While all practical librarians and most librarianship tutors will welcome Mr. Phillips' plea for commonsense "helpful" classification, the editorial remarks represent an over-simplified unhelpful approach to the subject.

S. J. TRAGUE, *Chelsea Public Library.*

Loose Frames Wanted

I quote:

"I have, as you very well know, a great deal of work on my hands. It's bad enough that I have to go to this lecture. I don't relish the idea of listening to Pforzheim, able though he is, let alone the prospect of hearing Rose Lorimer air her crazy theories afterwards. . . . If we want to know what Pforzheim . . . has to say, we can perfectly well read it in the journals."

So Angus Wilson in *Anglo Saxon Attitudes*. It might well have been said by a library school student on a wet morning, for so much of The Library Association's syllabus can be studied, given a reading list, without attending lectures at all. It is an utter waste of a tutor's time that he should be condemned, term after term, to repeat his notes on "issue methods" or Porphyry's wretched tree, whilst explanations lie manifest within a dozen textbooks.

Would not the library school tutor be most usefully employed as a "students' adviser," i.e. someone to whom the student, working within a loosely framed library school, but independently of a "class," could turn for advice on particular problems, and for guidance through the syllabus? This should also supply the tutor with time to prepare a very small number of lectures of extreme sagacity.

A comparable arrangement works, I believe, quite well at our greatest universities, where (if a further quote is permissible) they have, according to Aldous Huxley:—" . . . by far the best system of teaching. It is possible at Oxford or Cambridge to obtain a degree without ever attending any lectures at all."

IVOR KEMP, *Tottenham Public Libraries.*

New Examination Fees

The increase in examination fees forces at least one librarian to think of some method of reducing the financial burden. I would like to suggest the following:—

1. The *L.A. Record* should be optional and quarterly, with a lower rate of L.A. subscriptions for those who do not want the *Record*. The new *Liaison* fills the need for a monthly publication giving topical news, information and announcements.

2. The examination fees should be reduced after the first 2 attempts, again after 4 attempts, with all examinations free to those who have sat 6 times already. This would be a touching gesture to those who press on in the face of constant adversity instead of packing up and going down the mines.

Would the L.A. care to comment on the proposal for the *Record*? It seems to be a most privileged journal existing on very slender grounds. I know many assistants who find it dull and uninteresting, so let's hear from them, too.

R. M. LYLE, *Mobile Librarian,*
Hereford County Library.

BIRKBECK COLLEGE

(University of London).

Session 1957-1958 begins

Monday, 30th September, 1957.

Part-time (Evening) Courses provided for Internal Degrees in the Faculties of Arts and Science and for the Academic Post-Graduate Diplomas in Psychology and Numerical Analysis. Facilities also provided for part-time and full-time students reading for Higher Degrees in Arts and Science.

Applications for admission should be made before 1st June. Pamphlet and form of application may be obtained from the Registrar, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, W.C.1.

London Invites

—you to **THE THEATRE**

to see a matinee of Enid Bagnold's play, "The Chalk Garden,"
with Edith Evans in the leading part.

—to **TEA**

at Lyon's Corner House, Coventry Street.

—to the **A.G.M. of the A.A.L.,**

at Chaucer House, at 6.30 p.m., followed by

—**THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**

of Miss E. J. Wilson, F.L.A.

The date: Wednesday, 15th May, 1957.

Tea and the theatre will cost 10s. 6d. There are a limited number of tickets and applications should be sent as soon as possible to the Greater London Division's Hon. Secretary, P. D. Pocklington, A.L.A., Public Library, Chelmsford.

Annual General Meeting, 1957

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the previous meeting, held in the Connaught Hall, New-castle upon Tyne, on Wednesday, 16th May, 1956.

2. To receive the Annual Report of the Council, including the Annual Report of the Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Auditors for the year ended 31st December, 1956.
3. The retiring President, W. Tynemouth, Esq., F.L.A., will formally hand over the office of President to Miss E. J. Willson, F.L.A.
4. To nominate and elect two Honorary Auditors, who, in accordance with Rule 5(b), may not be members of the Council.
5. To consider the following motion submitted by Peter D. Pocklington and W. Howard Phillips: "That this A.G.M. stresses to the A.A.L. Council that the professional education of student members is one of the Association's chief objects and that its educational activities should be subsidised, if necessary, from the general funds."
- 6 Any other business.

ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS

(Section of the Library Association)

61st ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1956.

The annual reports of this Association in the early fifties were much pre-occupied with finance. That they have been less so for the past year or two is partly a tribute to the rescue operation performed by one of our most successful Honorary Treasurers, Mr. J. S. Bristow, who, after serving his year as Past President, now leaves the Council with a gap which will not be easy to fill. Towards the end of the year the financial warning was sounded once more, with the Honorary Treasurer pointing a finger at our declining balances. Skilful management and a successful publishing programme keep the Association clear of real danger, but if we are not off the plateau we are near its edge, and there is reason to wonder how long steadily rising prices in all directions can be met by an income which remains tied to a capitation figure fixed over a quarter of a century ago.

Again this year the Council discussed posts at inadequate salaries at every meeting. Representations from the A.A.L. helped to create the procedure now adopted by the Library Association of informing all Branch and Section Honorary Secretaries as soon as action is taken on an advertisement for a post at an inadequate salary. Later in the year the L.A. Council also agreed to our request that in future they should advertise in *The Times Literary Supplement* whenever such action is taken.

Internal reorganisation continued, and with the final revision of the General Rules accepted by the Annual General Meeting, a new edition of the Handbook for Divisional Officers completed, and the revision of Council's Standing Orders last year, it may be hoped that the Association will remain constitutionally healthy for a few years.

The President was inducted and gave his address at the Annual General Meeting, which was held in his home town, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on 16th May. The revised rules accepted by the meeting allow for the election in future of three "under-thirty" national councillors, and some will already have taken the unusually large total number of 22 candidates for the annual election as justification of the new rule.

The annual conference in its seventh year visited Norwich, where the theme, *Co-operation in Libraries*, was introduced in an opening address by Mr. R. F. Vollans. The discussion groups were most ably led by Miss G. S. Smith and Messrs. P. M. Caldwell, P. Colehan and O. M. Argles. The Council is grateful to Mr. Vollans and the discussion leaders, to the local authorities and librarians, and to Mr. F. D. Sayer, the Conference Secretary, and his divisional committee. All of these contributed greatly to the undoubted success of the conference, which despite its awkward location had almost a record attendance.

The high standard now expected of the A.A.L. Session at the Library Asso-

ciation Conference was maintained this year by Mr. O. S. Tomlinson at Folkestone. The meeting has been reported in the *Assistant Librarian*.

There were five Council meetings during the year. The following attendances were recorded:—

W. Tynemouth, F.L.A. (President) 5; Miss E. J. Willson, F.L.A. (Vice-President) 5; J. S. Bristow, F.L.A. (Past President) 5; A.L.L. Carver, F.L.A., 4; A. G. S. Enser, F.R.S.A., F.L.A., 4; A. C. Jones, F.L.A., 5; K. R. McCollvin, F.L.A., 5; W. Howard Phillips, F.L.A., 4; O. S. Tomlinson, F.L.A., 5 (National Councillors); Miss B. C. Clark, F.L.A. (Bristol) 5; W. A. Smith, F.L.A. (Devon and Cornwall) 4; J. W. Hunt, F.R.S.A., A.L.A. (Eastern) 3; F. D. Sayer, A.L.A. (Eastern) 1; P. A. Churley, B.A., A.L.A. (East Midland) 5; Miss E. M. Jahn, F.L.A. (East Midland) 1; Miss L. E. Green, A.L.A. (East Midland) 4; Miss M. Amor (G.L.D.) 2; Miss J. Binder, F.L.A. (G.L.D.) 5; J. C. G. Brooks, B.Sc. (Econ.), A.L.A. (G.L.D.) 1; A. C. Bubb, B.A., A.L.A. (G.L.D.) 1; D. B. Gibson, F.L.A. (G.L.D.) 5; O. W. Keen, F.L.A. (G.L.D.) 4; A. R. Thomas, A.L.A. (G.L.D.) 1; Miss M. Wilden-Hart, F.L.A. (G.L.D.) 2; Miss C. Wildhaber, B.A., A.L.A. (G.L.D.) 4; D. A. G. Wilson, B.A., A.L.A. (Kent) 1; J. F. Yeates, F.L.A. (Kent) 4; J. Brown, D.F.C., F.L.A. (Liverpool) 2; A. Jones, A.L.A. (Liverpool) 5; Miss S. M. Pinches, A.L.A. (Liverpool) 1; G. D. Williams, A.L.A. (Liverpool) 1; Miss E. K. Wilson, F.L.A. (Liverpool) 1; H. A. Chesshyre, A.L.A. (Manchester) 3; J. A. Cochrane, F.L.A. (Manchester) 1; F. J. E. Hurst, M.A., A.L.A. (Manchester) 4; R. A. Bangs, B.A., F.L.A. (Midland) 3; K. Laugharne, A.L.A. (Midland) 2; L. E. Taylor, A.L.A. (Midland) 5; J. T. Graham, A.L.A. (North Eastern) 5; C. Muris, M.A., A.L.A. (North Eastern) 5; H. G. Roberts (North Wales) 1; R. I. J. Tully, F.L.A. (North Wales) 4; C. F. Shepherd, A.L.A. (South Wales) 5; J. N. Harris, F.L.A. (Sussex) 1; J. H. Jones, A.L.A. (Sussex) 4; B. H. Baumfield, F.R.S.A., A.L.A. (Wessex) 5; W. R. Flint, F.L.A. (Yorkshire) 1; G. Thompson, F.L.A. (Yorkshire) 5; P. M. Whiteman, F.L.A. (Yorkshire) 4; H. G. Holloway, A.L.A. (Honorary Treasurer) 5; W. G. Smith, F.L.A. (Honorary Editor) 5; P. G. New, B.A., F.L.A. (Honorary Publications Officer) 5; Miss R. J. Ensing, F.L.A. (Honorary Membership Secretary) 5; J. S. Davey, F.L.A. (Honorary Education and Sales Officer) 5; W. F. Broome, F.L.A. (Honorary Films Officer) 4; R. G. Surridge, F.L.A. (Honorary Assistant Secretary) 5; E. E. Moon, F.L.A. (Honorary Secretary) 5.

A departure from normal practice was the holding of the May Council meeting in Newcastle on the day following the Annual General Meeting. Another attempt to keep members informed of the work of the Association has been the practice, commenced this year, of inviting students to Council meetings as observers. Students from the Brighton, Ealing, North-Western Polytechnic and Newcastle Schools of Librarianship have attended.

Although for the first time in very many years the name Martin was missing from the Council's attendance book, it figured prominently in the minutes, and 1956 may well be remembered as the Martins' year. Mrs. L. Martin joined her husband in the select ranks of the Honorary Fellows of the Association, the presentation being made at the Annual General Meeting. In addition, the Martin Award was instituted during the year. This is reported in more detail in the Education report which follows.

At the March meeting the Council heard with great regret of the death of a former President of the Association, Mr. H. Marr, of Sheffield.

The Council and its representatives continued to play their part in the affairs of the Library Association. Early in the year a memorandum was passed to the L.A. Council on the need for a better public relations policy. One concrete result to emerge from this was the L.A. Council's decision to publish a monthly news-sheet which will appear as an insert in the *Record* from January, 1957.

DIVISIONS:

A large part of the full record of the Association's work appears always in the annual reports of the Divisions, but some mention should be made here of a few of the projects carried out by the Divisions.

Special mention must be made of the Greater London Division on this occasion. In addition to the organisation of the largest Division in the country, the committee have found time to pursue a number of difficult tasks on behalf

of the Council. Among these were the compilation of a list of professional periodicals which should be provided by public libraries for students, a report on standardisation of stationery, a pilot survey on welfare and working conditions in non-public libraries, and the organisation of a most successful week-end school on display held at Finchley. Reports on these items have appeared in the *Assistant Librarian* during the year.

At the other end of the population scale the tiny Sussex Division have broken new ground with an ambitious scheme, accepted by the authorities in their area, for the interchange of staff who are studying for examinations. Among many other activities in the Divisions, untypical only in scale, was the ambitious week-end school with an all-star cast which was organised by the Yorkshire Division in November.

A smaller matter was the change of name requested by the Midland Division late in the year. In future there will be a West Midland as well as an East Midland Division, and those with a dread of cross-classification are appeased.

PUBLICATIONS:

Publications during the year were Corbett's *A.A.L. Guide to the First Professional Examination* (April), Caldwell's *An Introduction to County Library Practice* (June), and a revised edition in a special economy format of Hepworth's *Primer of Assistance to Readers* (December).

Two of the principal decisions made this year were to increase the type-size and page size of future A.A.L. *Primers*, and to bring the production of film-strips within the province of the Press and Publications Committee. It was found necessary in March to increase slightly the price of almost all publications to compensate for the higher postage rates.

The Association has 25 publications in print, 13 new works are in various stages of preparation, and revisions are in hand for a further six. Three proposed books are under consideration or deferred for the present. Going to press at the end of the year is Clough's *Bookbinding for Librarians*.

"THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN":

Increased membership brought a record circulation of over 8,000 to the *Assistant Librarian*, the peak being reached in June with 8,167 copies printed. Another record was the printing of 109 letters from members. Considerable controversy appeared in the correspondence columns on such matters as the latest novel by Kingsley Amis, library schools, display, the independence of small libraries, the alleged deficiencies of examiners, women in librarianship, institutional membership of the Library Association, and underpaid posts. The December number was devoted entirely to a controversy on censorship arising from a member's suggestions concerning the morals of book selection.

The Examination Supplement in the March issue was the last to be edited by Mr. O. S. Tomlinson, to whom the Council tendered its thanks for his good services in that office. His successor is Mr. E. F. Ferry, who commenced in the September issue with a supplement dealing with the new First Professional Examination.

FILMS:

Distribution of the film *Resources Discovered* began this year after the sound track had been slightly amended. The film was shown daily at the L.A. Conference at Folkestone, and sales and hirings have been steady. Directed chiefly at the small industrialist and merchant, this film may be used effectively by librarians as propaganda material.

Index to Progress continues to be hired and purchased after six years of good service. It has not "dated" and is still being widely used by librarians to illustrate the general services offered by British public libraries.

During the year the Council decided to investigate the possibilities of a programme of film strips for use by students and by librarians for public relations purposes.

EDUCATION:

1956 will be remembered by many A.A.L. tutors for the uncomfortably large numbers of students allocated to them. 1,450 correspondence courses were

arranged, as compared with 1,277 in the previous year. Apart from increasing demands for the First Professional course, numbers were unusually high in Groups B and D of the Registration, and the early sections of the Finals syllabus. Our appreciation of the overworked tutors should be recorded. Efforts were made to strengthen the panel, but in some subjects inevitable resignations left us with weaknesses.

During the year we welcomed the following to our panel of tutors:—Miss E. J. Anderson, F.L.A., B. Armitage, F.L.A., S. Barton, F.L.A., J. L. Horner, F.L.A., A. C. Jones, F.L.A., Miss B. M. Mulcahy, B.A., F.L.A., J. C. Powell, F.L.A., C. H. Ray, F.L.A., H. S. A. Smith, M.A., F.L.A., W. A. H. Smith, F.L.A., J. F. T. Thomson, M.A., F.L.A., O. S. Tomlinson, F.L.A., L. G. Tootell, F.L.A. and J. Walton, B.A., F.L.A.

We received the following resignations with regret: Miss E. R. Ellison, B.A., F.L.A., L. F. Hasker, F.L.A., J. L. Hobbs, F.R.Hist.S., F.L.A., W. J. Hobby, F.L.A., R. J. Parker, F.L.A., A. J. I. Parrott, F.L.A., Mrs. M. Pehle, F.L.A., and A. Rennie, F.L.A.

Although Mrs. Martin officially relinquished her office as Honorary Education Secretary in 1955, she has done much on the editorial side of our courses this year, before finally handing over this side of the work to the Honorary Education and Sales Officer. The name Martin will be perpetuated in the Martin Award, a sum of 5 guineas to be presented to the correspondence course student gaining the highest marks at each First Professional Examination.

A.A.L. courses go out to Malaya in the East and Canada in the West. A visit by the Director of Dutch Library Services during the year led to specimens of our courses being sent to Holland for use as models when the Dutch Library Services organise their own courses.

MEMBERSHIP:

This year again the total membership increased, the total at 31st December being 7,396. This was distributed among the Divisions as follows:—

Bristol	232	South Wales	209
Devon and Cornwall	139	Sussex	127
Eastern	143	Wessex	200
East Midland	433	West Midland	649
G.L.D.	2416	Yorkshire	539
Kent	220	Schools	297*
Liverpool	422	Scottish, Irish, Overseas, etc.	535
Manchester	652		
North Eastern	436		
North Wales.....	44		
		TOTAL ..	7396

*Included in Divisional totals.

Comparative figures for the last five years are:—

1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
6162	6490	6643	6637	7238

Members who had opted by 1st July, 1956, and were thereby eligible to vote totalled 5,964, as against the previous year's total of 5,766.

914 new members of the Library Association opted for the A.A.L. Seventy-nine personal letters were sent to new members who had not opted.

THE FUTURE:

If one were to look back through a file of annual reports, it would probably seem that the Association had been "at the cross-roads" several times in its history. It now seems obvious that the Library Association is also at a cross-roads. The part that the A.A.L. has played in the immediate past will probably be small in comparison to the responsibilities it may have to discharge in the future, perhaps within a vastly changed framework. We can only hope that we will be competent to discharge whatever responsibilities we may be forced to accept, and that we shall be as capable as our predecessors in making and taking opportunities.

W. TYNEMOUTH, *President*.

E. E. MOON, *Honorary Secretary*.

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

1st January to 31st December, 1956

GENERAL ACCOUNT

INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
To:	£	s. d.	By:	£	s. d.
Balance from 1955 ..	908	3 0	Payments to Divisions ..	811	6 0
Capitation Grant ..	1935	12 0	Councillors' Expenses ..	659	14 5
Subscriptions ..	1	5 0	Film ..	79	3 2
Index to Progress—Sales ..	10	16 1	Stationery ..	196	14 9
—Rentals ..	4	9 6	Library ..	110	0 0
Resources Discovered—Sales ..	42	12 0	Postage ..	55	1 2
—Rentals ..	4	12 0	Conference ..	64	14 8
Miscellaneous ..	30	13 8	Annual General Meeting ..	13	13 0
			Annual Election ..	72	8 2
			Clerical Expenses ..	123	10 0
			Contribution towards		
			<i>Assistant Librarian</i> ..	500	0 0
			Miscellaneous ..	25	3 8
			Balance in hand ..	226	14 3
	<u>£2938</u>	<u>3 3</u>		<u>£2938</u>	<u>3 3</u>

PUBLICATIONS ACCOUNT

INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
To:	£	s. d.	By:	£	s. d.
Balance from 1955 ..	533	13 4	<i>Assistant Librarian—</i>		
Sales ..	2206	6 9	Printing ..	1335	4 7
<i>Assistant Librarian—</i>			Distribution ..	383	18 0
Subscriptions ..	175	19 0	Stationery ..	117	10 2
Advertising ..	579	6 0	Royalties ..	434	4 11
Cont. from Gen. A/c. ..	500	0 0	Distribution ..	205	17 0
Miscellaneous ..	4	0 6	Postage ..	113	8 0
			Advertising ..	14	0 0
			Insurance ..	5	13 3
			Printing ..	532	4 9
			Refunds ..	61	11 0
			Clerical Expenses ..	150	0 0
			Miscellaneous ..	22	5 8
			Balance in hand ..	623	8 3
	<u>£3999</u>	<u>5 7</u>		<u>£3999</u>	<u>5 7</u>

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES ACCOUNT

INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
To:	£	s. d.	By:	£	s. d.
Balance from 1955 ..	225	19 1	Tutors' Expenses ..	2713	6 0
Students' Fees ..	3533	2 1	Hon. Education Secretary's Expenses ..	149	8 7
Sale of Notebooks ..		18 3	Postage ..	75	0 0
			Stationery ..	229	18 4
			Refunds of Fees ..	6	17 6
			Standard Courses—		
			Compiling ..	68	5 0
			Editing ..	76	13 0
			Duplicating ..	356	3 11
			Miscellaneous ..	2	0 0
			Balance in hand ..	82	7 1
	<u>£3759</u>	<u>19 5</u>		<u>£3759</u>	<u>19 5</u>

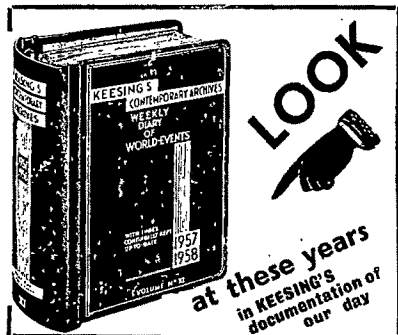
BENEVOLENT FUND ACCOUNT

INCOME				EXPENDITURE			
To:		£	s. d.	By:		£	s. d.
Balance from 1955	..	451	6 6	Balance in Hand	..	463	0 1
Interest on N.S. Certificates		11	9 7				
Interest on P.O.S.B. Account		4	0				
		£463	0 1			£463	0 1

All the above statements audited and found correct.

(Signed) A. E. BROWN, } *Hon.* H. G. HOLLOWAY, *Hon. Treasurer.*
W. H. MABEY, } *Auditors.*

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THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians
(Section of the Library Association)

EDITOR: W. G. SMITH.

Westminster Public Libraries, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.

VOL. 50 NO. 5

MAY, 1957

The Compleat Librarian

The Editor's Report of The A.A.L. Conference at Winchester

WHAT good is a conference? Well, we learnt of libraries where they work a six-day week with a half-day off every third week; we heard of a splendid scheme for exchanging staff between Holborn, Birmingham, Nottingham and Derby County; of a chief librarian who actively discouraged his staff from attending meetings; of various training schemes; and the views of many young people on their salaries and conditions. Now, if some of these good schemes are adopted elsewhere, and if some of the staff in the bad libraries agitate more to have them improved in the light of the information gained, the conference will have been a success.

The numbers were a little overwhelming, with over 180 assistants turning up at a glorious spot overlooking the Hampshire downs. They found themselves in a teacher's training college with hard beds, good food, cheerful staff, and, we hope, good company. Your Editor only just survived a valiant attempt to drown him in a surfeit of lemon-meringue pie, Ron Surridge found a polite note in his room from its normal inmate asking him to water the cactus, while the Treasurer, aptly enough, was greeted with large texts designed to save his soul. A horde of amateur photographers seemed to find the national officers permanently encumbered with the products of the local beer emporium, which perhaps led to the resolution submitted from Manchester that training courses should be held to bring the divisional members "up to national drinking standards."

The social success of the week-end was the playing of the Winchester City Jazz Men which led to a display of gymnastic dancing unrivalled at any previous conference (or, we suspect, anywhere else). The performance of Roy "Snakehips" McColvin indeed led someone to speculate that he had "not only ants in his pants, but the whole darned zoo."

The Candidate.

The large attendance destroyed the plan of small discussion groups, but, in spite of that, they proved much more fun and more instructive than any kind of formal meeting. Here was a true exchange of practical ideas which benefited the older members as much as the new assistant.

Mr. Tynemouth led the discussions on the new entrant to librarianship. What did libraries want from candidates for jobs; what did they want from us; and how can we get better ones?

There was little disagreement over academic qualifications, five G.C.E.

passes being thought adequate. Some wanted to restrict the number of times a member could sit any one part of the L.A. examinations, while others stoutly maintained the "freedom to fail."

Interviews for jobs should be conducted by one or two librarians in an informal manner (there are apparently still some very backward authorities where the poor sixteen-year-old has to appear before the full libraries committee). Someone produced a seven point plan from an "improbable institute of psychology" which Mr. Tynemouth suggested we see but not use!

What qualities should the new recruit possess? A minority maintained that an interest in books was not necessarily important: a wide variety of interest, knowledge of what is going on in the world, and a lively personality were thought to be the important things. Others thought that some book knowledge and even a critical approach to reading is important although all recognised the danger of employing the "literary recluse."

The Junior

Why does the good candidate become in a few months a disgruntled junior handing in his notice to "go into insurance"? "Money" was the firm answer of one group in spite of determined efforts of discussion leader Godfrey Thompson to suggest otherwise. Other groups were less mercenary and suggested that the hours might have something to do with it; boys, in particular, needing Saturdays free to participate in sport. Above all, time and time again the words *Boredom* and *Drudgery* were mentioned as the main cause of disgruntlement.

What is the answer? Good in-service training helps the new entrant to understand the need for the various routines. There is no better method of doing this than by personal instruction from an enthusiastic senior, but a good second best is more formal instruction to groups of juniors. Mr. Thompson explained how in Hull newcomers are given a fortnight's solid course of training. "How horrible," rejoined Holborn's Miss Nattee (thereby proving that Mr. Thompson was an excellent discussion leader who had succeeded in getting young people to be very outspoken). Most people seemed to prefer something less drastic such as a session once a week. There was much more approval for Hull's methods in which dummy counters are set up and the Deputy plays the part of an irate reader in order to demonstrate how such customers should be handled.

Over and over again in this discussion, the importance of the attitude of the middle ranks of staff was emphasised and we found with regret that enthusiasm is not coming from the average badly underpaid departmental head and senior assistant.

Should juniors be readers' advisers? Everyone agreed that this was good for the junior, but bad for the reader, and so an inevitable compromise was reached in which it was suggested that juniors should "sit in" with seniors doing this sort of work.

There were many complaints about inhuman administration. Typical of this is the staff instruction:—"With effect from next Monday, Jane Jones will be transferred from East Branch to Central Lending." Jane has this sprung upon her without any previous consultation or even a friendly verbal tip, and naturally feels upset not so much at the order as at the way it is given. Ought there not to be some channel by which juniors could express their view to senior officers without being victimised (we heard tale of branches which were regarded as punishment stations for agitators, although, in contrast, the Editor insisted that every time he

agitated he was promoted!). Staff Guilds, in principle, were very unpopular, but there really seems no alternative.

It is MOST IMPORTANT that the junior should not have the feeling of being just one of the crowd; if he is convinced that he is an important part of a team, he will want to stay in librarianship.

The Student

The main argument in favour of full-time schools seemed to be that they might be great fun. Mr. Lockwood, one of the Brighton School of Librarianship, took bravely on the chin various criticisms of tutors ("They have ceased to be librarians, they are not trained teachers, so what are they?"). He valiantly defended some of his colleagues who were alleged to write and talk too much, claiming that there was a need for this in order to get ideas circulated, argued and grumbled about.

Theoretical advantages of having fewer and larger library schools seemed outweighed by considerable sentiment in favour of smaller groups, but no doubt Mr. Lockwood's large following of ex-Brighton Belles was the decisive factor here. There seemed little interest in attaching schools to universities, but a good deal in favour of linking them to good libraries.

The Professional

Mr. Clough, leading discussions on the professional librarian, found his groups rather naively deciding that since librarianship was for the social good, it was, therefore, a profession. Some, however, complained of a lack of philosophy and purpose. Breadth of interest, a "curious" mind, and a mental outlook conditioned by a course of intensive study outside the L.A. syllabus, were some of the qualities of the ideal professional (this seemed to contradict the earlier decision that five passes of G.C.E. are sufficient). Reading, in itself, was not considered of great value, but "personality is everything."

The librarian must keep in touch with recent developments in his profession, and this led to "an examination of the L.A. in very general terms, which I thought was the decent thing to do," said Mr. Clough. To his "surprise and astonishment" there were people present who considered that the *Record* is doing a good job. Other professional periodicals were "sighed over," and it was suggested that the Schools might combine to publish a journal. One other idea was that the *Record* should become a quarterly with *Liaison* changing its title to *Library Reveille* and publishing weekly.

At the final summing-up session, President Miss Willson seemed disappointed that there were not more definite conclusions forthcoming but that was probably inevitable with a subject of this nature. Many will agree with Mr. Lockwood, "I have learned a great deal of other people's views which will help me to form my own views." That is the value of a conference.

Brighton School of Librarianship Old Students Association

In an effort to form an Old Students' Association, a group of ex-students from Brighton Library School met at the A.A.L. Conference at Winchester, and have formed a nucleus of an Association which it is hoped all past members of the School will support. An initial subscription of 2s. 6d. is to be charged for the first year and a reunion is to be held at Brighton in September.

Will all old students who are interested write to:—DAVID W. BROMLEY, 178, Binley Road, Coventry.



THE NORMAL READER

*Some observations on
Branchmanship*

*By Geoffrey Langley
Nottingham Public Libraries*

ALL librarians who are in constant contact with the public know that the reaction of an average citizen to a given circumstance or situation can be forecast with some accuracy. In so far as this applies to the borrowing and use of fiction stock the following reactions have been observed in an urban branch library of moderate size over a period of some years.

THE REACTIONS

The Unusual Shape.

Readers are very cautious in their approach towards unusual shapes in books. When confronted with a tall work of fiction they pass it by. This, it has been observed, does not take the form of an appreciation followed by a considered rejection, but a definite antipathy towards the accidental oddity presented to the eye; the seasoned reader acquires in time a power of selective vision which automatically rejects all but Crown Octavo without, apparently, being aware of it. An exception must be made in cases where the large size retains the dust-jacket. In such a case it is issued without any difficulty, unless, of course, it happens to be published by Gollancz. Examples of this selective vision can be seen in cases where the library possesses copies of the same work in both Crown Octavo and a larger size: in such a case the larger size will remain on the shelf while the normal one is issued. Is this due to the widespread impression that a large book is a heavy book and, consequently, a dull book?

The Book Beautiful : Oddities in Binding.

A corollary of the above is the reaction to unusual colour combinations or unfamiliar spine designs. When these are combined with the Unusual Shape then the fate of the work is assured: only a drastic re-binding will ever get it off the shelf. When it is a standard Crown Octavo the result is in doubt: *The Asiatics* (Prokosch) is a good example. This book issued rapidly until the jacket was removed, revealing a pink-and-purple decor enriched with a curly panel on the spine. Two copies of this work have been in permanent residence on the shelves ever since. (There is some doubt here, of course, as to whether this illustrates a craving for normality on the part of the reader, or simply a sound artistic sense).

Fine Printing.

The "Book Beautiful" tends to suffer a similar fate. These books, when their idiosyncracies are confined to their insides, are sometimes

issued on their titles alone, but unless they have some especially powerful and compelling theme generally remain fresh and clean after about page six. They fall into several well-defined groups:—

(a) Books using unusual type-faces (not necessarily exotic ones). Cheltenham is a good example, but there are many others. This also applies to type-faces which, though normal in most respects, have yet some marked eccentricity: the affected “st” ligature in many pre-war books (and at least one current professional journal) comes to mind at once, as does the lower-case “g” in the Perpetua family. The verdict of the public is usually “there’s something funny about this print.”

(b) Works of fiction with illustrations, other than the classics, are avoided: whether because their being illustrated savours of childishness, of oddity, or of artiness is in doubt. Decorations, head- and tail-borders and anything in the nature of floriated or decorative initials are also viewed with misgiving. It is true that such things tend to obtrude themselves between the reader and the story and provide a source of irritation: there may also be an instinctive realisation on the part of the reader that books treated in this manner are usually aggressively literary and often obstinately unreadable. For some reason, wood-cuts are easily the most unpopular. The observations made in (a) and (b) above apply, naturally, to marginal authors only. Collins’ Romances would issue if they were printed in black letter in two folio volumes.

(c) Books whose titles run vertically. Unless these happen to be the only form in which a very popular author is obtainable (as for instance Dorothy L. Sayers) they remain on the shelf. When re-bound, be the new horizontal letter never so small, they issue well.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

This tendency of regular fiction readers to establish a groove, and thereafter automatically to follow it, may be used, together with an appreciation of their group psychology, to combat the above prejudices and to even out the use made of the stock. Some reliable methods are:—

The Shelf Switch.

Most gratifying results may be obtained by exchanging the bay to which returned novels are taken with a less-used section of the fiction stock. This has been known to empty S—Z almost completely for months, during which time Zola, Zweig, Frances Brett Young and Hugh Walpole enjoyed unprecedented popularity.

The Duplicate Split.

This is an extension of the Shelf Switch, and is to be used in the common events of duplicate copies coming together on the shelf. Often this will result in the issue of neither. If, however, one copy is removed and placed on the “returned books” shelves the probability is that both will go. This can also be applied to any work of fiction that sticks.

White Sepulchres.

The attraction which piles of apparently forbidden books have for readers is widely known. Readers will ransack a pile of “sticking” fiction if it is mixed with one or two new books and left unattended for a few moments, and carry much of it off in triumph. Readers of Western novels will recognise the principle of “Salting” a gold-mine. A shelf near the counter with some such notice as “Books are not issued from these shelves” would be an even better ploy. Again, during a busy period, Branchmen may leave a pile of books on the counter instead of removing it (the pile) to the rear, works which it is desired to issue being infiltrated into it. Whether this conveys something of the atmosphere

of the bargain basement or for some other reason books so left exercise a powerful fascination on readers. A less scrupulous method of issuing books, and one resorted to only by the desperate, is to present the urchin who asks for two murders and a love with something choice by Dostoevsky, or a couple of obscure Priestleys. Surprisingly enough, so strange are the ways of man, borrowers so treated have been known to send for more.

The Date-Label Gambit

An experiment which can produce very interesting results is this: take a persistently sticking novel and insert upon the date-label a dozen or so date-stamps at intervals of ten to fourteen days, marking these unobtrusively for your own information. In many cases the book will then issue regularly on the strength of this fictitious popularity.

Some books, naturally, fail to issue through sheer lack of interest rather than through some defect in their presentation. The only thing to do with these is to get rid of them as quickly as may be. If you don't, then you may experience the devastating reply given to the present writer by a borrower invited to comment on certain outstanding books: "My husband was tidying the house, and threw them out with a lot of other rubbish."

The illustration is from "The Reader and the Bookish Manner," published by the A.A.L. at 2s. 9d.

Classifiers or Witchdoctors?

W. Howard Phillips was hotly attacked in our last issue for his comments on the alleged misuse of Dewey by the B.N.B. and library school tutors

Mr. Phillips Replies :

The blown-up load of gas (many thanks, Mr. Callander!) of Messrs. Foskett, Gann and Mills, printed in the April *Assistant*, merely illustrates some of the points I tried to make in my earlier article, "Think for Yourself—Again"; and certainly strengthens my plea for an unequivocal statement regarding the use of the Decimal Classification in the Registration examination. Discerning readers will, of course, appreciate that I did *not* condemn synthetic or close classification, neither did I advocate broad classification as such; I was *not* concerned with the qualifications (practical or otherwise) of B.N.B. classifiers; I did *not* claim that the normal use of the Dewey schedules would produce perfect or even adequate notations in all cases.

I did, however, point out that many students were misusing Dewey and my ponderings upon the possible influence of the library schools and the B.N.B. classification are surely confirmed in these three outbursts. (It is indeed a sobering thought to be assured by Mr. Mills that the B.N.B. numbers are, above all, a boon to "teachers and students of classification"). I further contended that, in the examination room at least, the *Decimal Classification* should not be subjected to experiments in synthesis which properly belong to an entirely different and less prosaic scheme. I did suggest that adaptations, thought to be necessary by individuals or organisations to overcome real or imagined weaknesses of Dewey, should not automatically be accepted as standard practice and

certainly should not be demanded even by implication in the Registration Examination.

Despite the misleading, and possibly inspired, vapourings of this trio of Special Librarian, Tutor and Tutored, it must be insisted that to the great majority of librarians all over the world, book classification is still considered merely as a means to an end, a method of producing a convenient arrangement of books and records, for both reader and staff. This does not automatically demand, except in a few very large specialised libraries for which special schemes have been or should be formulated, that every word of a title or aspect of subject matter be transcribed into notational symbols.

The *Decimal Classification* is, of course, structurally out of date and for some libraries must be considered inadequate, but it has been widely adopted throughout the world as a relatively simple scheme (when used as envisaged by its formulator) and this, in itself, helps to guarantee its continued use for many years to come. Merely to chant that the future of book classification lies in synthesis and to apply the synthetic principle of division *ad lib.* to the Dewey Schedules is no solution. The *B.N.B.* has in fact merely produced a hybrid classification, even more cumbersome in application and nonsensical in notation than the original—a scheme which, if anything, detracts from the general usefulness of this competent and useful national bibliography (students and teachers apart!). I must reiterate my previous contention that the examiners, as practical librarians, can hardly penalise the “normal” and correct use of Dewey in the Registration Examination (opportunities for legitimate number building and the production of long notations do, of course, abound in the printed schedules).

Finally, on a more personal note, may I express my gratification that because of, or despite, a seeming weakness in a certain correspondence course, Mr. Foscett can now speak from a wealth of at least two years' experience . . . and proclaim my delight in the vision of the young Gann uplifted from chaos by the mumbo-jumbo of a magic formula incanted perhaps by the witchdoctor, Mr. Mills!

A Tutor Supports Phillips

From S. J. Teague, Classification Tutor, Croydon Technical College:—

Your correspondents have ignored Mr. Phillips' comments which bear directly on the Registration examination in practical classification for students opting to use the Dewey Decimal Scheme.

The main point is that a candidate has every right to know just what the examiners expect of him, and, as Mr. Phillips suggests, it is time that the L.A. stated that *B.N.B.* variations on the Dewey Decimal Scheme are not required in this practical examination. These ideas deriving from Ranganathan are valid and most useful in teaching classification theory and in critically examining the various schemes, as well as in adopting a faulty classification scheme to the requirements of a National Bibliography.

We did not need Mr. Foscett to explain that the examples quoted were wrong. Phillips demonstrated that synthesis *to a degree not in the schedules* leads students to class books thus in the wrong class.

Mr. Phillips implies that some Library School students, instructed in synthesis with the aim of assigning a classmark as nearly co-extensive with the content of the book as possible, are failing the examination and later taking correspondence courses and evening classes, and demonstrating their ability to classify by producing these impossible notations.

MOBILE LIBRARIES

A Tardy Toot!

By Sheila Bannister

This winter, at least, I have not had to combine the post of unofficial snow-plough with that of mobile librarian, so I have a little time to set pen to paper and, inspired by the editor's call in the February *Assistant Librarian*, somewhat belatedly take up Mr. Hoptrough's challenge.

It seems to me that the only satisfactory answer to his remarks would be a new text-book on Mobile Librarianship. The lack of literature on this subject will, I believe, be remedied when the post-war generation of mobile librarians reaches the years of discretion and positions of authority. So far as I know, none of our older librarians has experience of operating a mobile library for day after day, week after week, for any length of time. Unless one has actually served this apprenticeship, one cannot, I think, really appreciate the problems, difficulties—and pleasures—attached to operating a mobile library. It is yet another subject on which it is far too easy to propound theories.

However, since there is no room for the technicalities of a text-book within the pages of *The Assistant Librarian*, here are a few points which may be of general interest.

For maximum efficiency it is necessary, I think, to staff all mobile libraries, from the largest trailer library to the smallest travelling library designed to manoeuvre the ruttiest of cart-tracks, with a qualified librarian and a driver-assistant. To find a potential McColvin and an embryo Henry Ford combined in the same person would be a stroke of luck unlikely to fall to the lot of any library authority.

The moment one signs one's papers as a mobile librarian, carburettors, anti-freeze, distributors, dynamos and petrol consumption assume a major importance in one's life. I have often thought during the past two years that a diploma in motor mechanics would have been more useful than a Pass in Group A of Registration.

Let me correct the erroneous impression which many non-mobile-librarians seem to hold—that the post is a sinecure, involving a pleasant trip round the countryside and stamping a few books. Book-selection, in so far as it is within the control of the librarian-in-charge, is very important. With the limited space at one's disposal, every book must be of value to some reader; there is no room for dead stock. Non-fiction stock must be selected with an eye to meeting as many queries as possible—a week's delay may be vital if someone's cow is about to breathe its last.

The art of the reader's adviser is very highly developed on a mobile library. With the time limit laid down by the route schedules, a high proportion of readers require help in choosing their books. Many readers prefer to leave the task entirely to the librarian, who has to develop a phenomenal memory in order not to offer Mrs. Brown the book which she has read only three weeks previously. (The rapid circulation of stock from route to route does obviate this difficulty a little). There is also the problem of choosing books for people whom one seldom meets, usually men who are at work when the library calls and whose wives come in to collect their books. My own vehicle does operate three evenings a week, but, even so, some villages can have only day-time visits.

There is a very close personal relationship between the mobile librarian and the readers. Because the librarian puts in an appearance regularly once a week or once a fortnight, the readers believe that he has no other existence and consequently relate many of their private affairs and opinions to him. On account of this personal relationship between librarian and reader, it would be difficult to enforce many of the rules and regulations to be found in a normal branch library, such as fines.

One of the most important things to remember is that a reader cannot visit the library again for at least another week—it simply won't be there. It is, therefore, almost morally wrong to allow an elderly lady, whose tastes lie in the romantic field, to take out Ivy Compton-Burnett's latest novel under the impression that it is a light romance. Off-moments should have no place in the working life of a mobile librarian, if each reader is going to get full value from the service.

The appreciation of the readers who are served more than compensates for the arctic conditions which one is expected to survive during the winter. (One can often run a pleasant side-line in shovelling snow). The good use made of mobile and travelling libraries throughout many rural districts bears witness to the good work which their librarians are doing. Let us have a few more toots!

An Angry Honk

By Joan Firth

Having read the article by the two Leicestershire mobile librarians in your February issue, I felt compelled to make some reply.

With your permission I should like to take this account a point at a time, omitting the first paragraph which is too horrible for comment.

These librarians call themselves librarian/drivers, by which I presume they are librarians who can drive. If this is so, then I am at a loss to understand their unprofessional outlook, and their apparent inability to cope with everyday problems. If, however, they are drivers who are obliged to act as librarians, then they have my sympathy, and I can well understand the defeatist tone of the article.

Assuming that they are professional librarians—do they have to tackle the job as though they were delivering the groceries. They refer, for example, to the "van," which is a terrible word and should never be used in connection with a vehicular library. "Non-fiction" is another unfortunate expression which sets up inhibitions in a reader's mind at once. "Non-fiction" *sounds* dull. A "General" ticket for "General" books enables the librarian to lead the reader gently and painlessly on to better books.

It was the paragraph in which the Leicester librarians bemoan the difficulty of "enforcing" two fiction and two non-fiction books on each reader, which really made me feel that I could not keep silent. Who, in heaven's sake ever heard of "enforcing" anyone to take books which they do not want. Display, exploit, praise your books, and influence and persuade your readers by all means—but enforce!

Then we come to the pathetic picture of a harassed housewife trying to choose books for the rest of the family, and apparently several other families. *Of course* the poor soul does not know what to choose. She may not even be a reader herself, and if she is, she will certainly be bewildered when faced by about 2,000 books arranged in such a way as to baffle her on purpose, or so it seems to many readers. But what is

the function of a librarian? Is it not to put the right books into the hands of the right reader? Then why has this harassed housewife to do her own choosing? My borrowers simply hand me their tickets and say "Two for Mr. A., and the usual for Mr. B." I am proud to think that they have confidence in my choice, and I cannot imagine any librarian worthy of the name allowing borrowers to flounder among the books, finally taking quite unsuitable ones. I cannot think of a quicker way of losing borrowers.

Of course an evening service is the ideal at which to aim, and unless Leicestershire is very unusual, there will be no shortage of drivers. My experience is that supply far exceeds demand.

Then we come to the sad cry about the difficulties of holiday issues. Of course we all know that "double issue" for holidays does cause extra work, and certain difficulties. The greatest of these is caused by borrowers not bringing back *all* their books after a holiday, thus making it difficult to find all the issues when two are in a pocket. The complaint that readers bring the books back in a state of "chaos" seems very odd to me. Surely all that is necessary is for the reader to hand the books to the librarian who will then put them in alphabetical order. By taking the first, third and every alternative book in turn, all the issues will come to light, *providing* that they have been "doubled up" in strict alphabetical order on the day of issue. The blame for any "chaos" must surely be at the librarian's door. If the difficulty is caused by the fact that the vehicles have no provision for cupboards or lockers, then I would respectfully suggest that Leicestershire should change its designer of mobile libraries.

Having read to the last paragraph, one is not surprised by then to read in all seriousness—"but is it necessary to have a qualified assistant on each van?" No, if we regard books as commodities, to be dumped at people's houses in "enforced" numbers, then obviously a qualified librarian is superfluous. The man who used to drive the ice cream van will do just as well. If we regard a period of service on a mobile library as a penance, as these writers obviously do, a period during which they are going to miss all those wonderful classes and meetings (why should they miss them if they are based on H.Q. and do not operate an evening service?) then the best and most qualified staff will not work on the Mobile libraries. Surely the implication cannot be that old popular misconception that country people are a "bit dim." I know from my own experience that true country folk are more intelligent, read a better type of book, and are more appreciative of the service than the housing estate dweller on the fringe of the town. Nothing could be worse for the service than librarians in charge of Mobile libraries (I refuse to call them "Van assistants") serving for short periods only. Frequent changes of staff are upsetting to borrowers, and to the service.

If Mobile Librarianship is regarded in its true light, it is the most rewarding of all branches of librarianship. The closeness of the link between borrower and librarian is something which is not possible in any other kind of library, and the work is so limitless and so eminently satisfying. Anyone can have the juggling with Dewey and catalogue cards for me—that is not true librarianship.

These views are my own and may not be those of the Authority by whom I am employed. I hope they are, however, otherwise I have got the wrong idea about my work,—but somehow I do not think so.

COMMENT from Miss Jo Eldridge, A.L.A., Swindon Public Library:

The original article was a statement of facts relating to a particular service (covering rural, industrial and mining villages) in reply to Mr. Hoptrough's request for statistics to which Mrs. Firth has not contributed here.

To enlarge on some of the facts: "Enforce" was a very unhappy word; it should have been "restrict to".

Mrs. Firth's issue system in West Riding [sic] seems different from that in Leicestershire; perhaps she will explain it as this is the kind of information Mr. Hoptrough seems to require. In Leicestershire all the issues for one family go in one ticket.

The "Librarian/driver" in Leicestershire is the only employee of the County Council in attendance on each Travelling Library, and, where possible, is a chartered librarian. In answer to advertisements for the last vacancy, only *one* reply was received from a person not already on the staff—the supply is hardly exceeding the demand.

In that area, Branch and District meetings are invariably in the afternoon, and often 30-50 miles away; unless we used annual leave, the only ones we could attend were week-end conferences. Drivers can and do go to evening classes—in Nottingham.

Judging from the advertisements in the T.L.S., many small county library branches are staffed by unqualified assistants; this does not seem professionally desirable either, but the lack must be made up for by qualified regional librarians with wide abilities. This can apply to a mobile service, too.

Otherwise, I personally endorse all Mrs. Firth's opinions and also those of Mr. South (*L.A.R.*, April, 1954), but while she has probably had a driver discharging issues and stamping books for her, I did that myself whilst trying at the same time to give the kind of service she advocates. After 2½ years, I have taken my eyes off the road to turn my attention wholly upon the readers.

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Annual General Meeting, 1957

Please bring your copy of the April issue of the *Assistant Librarian*, containing the Agenda and Annual Report.

The Librarian Educator

A review by **Eric Moon**

Students are told repeatedly to-day of the importance of periodicals, and the First Professional examiners are insistent in their demands that assistants should at least know something of periodicals in the field of librarianship. Reviews appear in the professional press from time to time, but all too often they concentrate on books. This short article is offered in the hope that it might be the first of a series of reviews of particularly noteworthy issues of one or other of our professional journals.

In view of the fact that the *Librarian* devotes so much of its space to (and derives so much of its copy from) the *Assistant Librarian*, it is perhaps appropriate that this journal should reciprocate by devoting some of its space to the cause of publicizing the *Librarian* to a wider audience than it now possesses.

The issue under consideration is dated November-December, 1956. It reached those members who receive it sometime in the second week of February, 1957. Undaunted, Thomas Cakebread, from his glass house on page 206, hurls a fistful of stones at the *Library World* for issuing its August-September volume to readers early in October. Cakebread's glee at this slip brings on a moment of gravity, and he pronounces on the *Library World* thus: "Not perhaps the liveliest of our journals, but at times . . . certainly the most pompous."

Vol. XLV, No. 10, of the *Librarian* (the independent professional journal) is a double number devoted to Education for Librarianship. It opens with a *Foursome on Education*, a dialogue umpired by Mr. K. C. Harrison, in which he purports to gather together the views of a librarian, a student, an examiner and a tutor. Mr. Harrison claims that anonymity has been preserved so that the frank opinions of those taking part in the conversation could be recorded. It is more charitable to believe that this is Mr. Harrison's first attempt to present fiction in Nigel Balchin's *Lord, I Was Afraid* manner. Of the caricatures taking part, the student speaks either "impetuously" or "with relish," while the librarian has a wider range, managing to deliver his views "smoothly," "sagely" and "uneasily." No attempt is made to describe the delivery of K.C.H., the examiner or the tutor. If they were wise they spoke in whispers. Such "frank" opinions are as dangerous as dandelions.

There follows a nice piece of admitted "stone-slinging" by Mr. Bearman, County Librarian of West Sussex. Mr. Bearman does a reasonable job of destruction, and leaves little doubt as to how he would answer the L.A. essay question, *Technician or Bookman?* He is followed by Mr. Neville Dain, Head of the Leeds School of Librarianship, hot in pursuit of a philosophy of librarianship, via a consideration of *Public Library Standards and Education in Librarianship*. This article contains some pungent and acute comments on the bookstocks of most public libraries, and is sufficiently thought-provoking to make one look forward to Mr. Dain's second instalment, promised for the next issue, presumably due in January (*the January issue was eventually published—at the end of February*. EDITOR). The series of pronouncements on education is wound up with the assistant's point of view, presented by Mr. Pinnock, M.A., A.L.A., Reference Librarian at Eastbourne.

The always excellent column by J.F.W.B. concentrates on this occasion on surveys, O. & M., and the *Directory of Metropolitan Public Libraries*. Then, following a tub-thumping letter from Mr. Foskett and

a defence of B.N.B. ordering by Mr. Butcher, we arrive at page 206. Here commence three columns of *Irritations* experienced by a pseudonymous gent called Cakebread. We were under the impression that bakers mix cake and bread only when both are stale. Our impression is now regularly confirmed.

A poacher and a parasite by profession, Cakebread derives almost the whole of his material from other professional periodicals. Supreme among his talents is the ability to write equally badly in either verse or prose. On reflection that is perhaps unfair—nothing could be *quite* as bad as the verse. *The Library World*, the *London Librarian* and the *Assistant* are his favourite grazing grounds, and Messrs. Smith and Moon seem to make him scratch more than most. He admits that the *Assistant* is not without humour and is acute enough to detect that “it is at its funniest when it is most serious.” We bow in humble gratitude to Cakebread—it is not often that we are given credit for being serious. It is, of course, not nearly so difficult to detect when Cakebread is being serious. Then he becomes pontifical and platitudinous, as in the pronouncement re the *Library World* above. Most of the time he is straining desperately to be funny, and when at his most riotous, he lapses into rhyme and metre. If you are one of those who will try anything for a laugh, try Cakebread.

This notable issue of the *Librarian* finally takes us through the *Children's Room* to a series of *rapid reviews*. We presume that this means “rapid” in execution—it could not refer to the appearance of the reviews. B.N.B. may take from heart from these titles, most of which will by now have reached one of the cumulated volumes.

The reviews are arranged in simplified Dewey order. At 923.2 we find a review of a book on Richard Austen Butler which is described as “the first book in a *new series*” (our italics). The reviewer concludes “we shall look forward to the appearance of the next Rockliff monograph, which is to be on Sir Anthony Eden.”

The review of the next book, also classified at 923.2, commences: “This is the second book in the Rockliff Political Monograph series, which began so well with Francis Boyd’s book on R. A. Butler.” It is on Sir Anthony Eden. The book is described as a “complete and up-to-date picture.” One cannot say the same for the review, which talks of the story being brought right up to the *latest* Cabinet re-shuffle (our italics again).

Generally these reviews may be said to maintain a standard. What that standard is may be ascertained from the following comment on Alfrida Vipont’s life of Arnold Rowntree—“this is a story well worth telling, and the book is certainly one that should be in a public library.” The reviewer of Gilbert Harding’s *Book of Manners* informs us that “a dose of the Harding corrective will do none of us any harm.”

This consideration of the *Librarian's* double issue may best be concluded with the following words from its own review of Karl Marx’s *Selected Writings*. “We are grateful for the crumbs of what must have been a great feast, which this volume offers us.” Perhaps Gilbert Harding’s indigestion tablets would help, too.

* * *

SILLY STATISTICS “if the books taken home by readers each day were stacked in a pile, flat on their sides, the pile would be much higher than the Empire State Building, television mast and all.” (From the President’s report, Bulletin of the New York Public Library). This is the sort of thing that once led another American to remark “The only statistic I can remember is that if all the people who go to sleep in Church were laid end to end, they’d be a lot more comfortable.”—EDITOR.

Point of No Return

by Brian Selby

The last days of Mr. W. Tynemouth's presidency of the A.A.L. were starred by his exploration of the unknown land beyond *The Point of No Return*; his talk which followed the A.G.M. of the London Division.

My Tynemouth commented that librarianship "has very few men of foresight and genius." In 1956 he himself led the A.A.L. with statesmanship and wit, but perhaps he will be best remembered for his clear view of the current situation of British librarianship, exemplified by the foresight of his approach to the problem of easing the public libraries away from local government. "Municipal domination ended at Southport," affirmed Mr. Tynemouth, but he also believed that the Southport A.G.M. of the L.A. in 1955 was "the point of no return" for attempts to oust the authorities from the L.A. by the thinly veiled force of the professional membership.

But local government politics disregard the user of the library service. It is the users of the service whose interests the profession has at heart, and it is in those interests that the L.A. should be the voice of professional opinion, especially when standards of service are at stake. The L.A. Council memorandum was the ground over which a battle was fought between the Association of Municipal Corporations and the L.A.; between the opinion of authority members and library committees, which is not necessarily the opinion of the majority of public library users, and our profession striving to make possible a higher standard of library service which would be available, through a nationally integrated service, to the country at large.

My Tynemouth rejected the idea that a revolution from inside the profession against the authorities is the way to resolve the situation. He came out in favour of the imposing of a new structure on our nation wide library service from above. He suggested that the profession should lobby the House of Commons and use all possible influence in the national political parties to create in the government an awareness of the need for "good library service not only to individuals, but to industry and education" as the precursor of legislation to make such a service possible. Mr. Tynemouth stated his belief that we shall see "library service as an important feature of national life in a very short time."

Those who desire for the very near future a national library service nationally organized and nationally financed, providing the facilities which a 20th century civilization needs and which the limited resources of local government cannot provide, will accept Mr. Tynemouth as a clear thinking, cool headed champion of their cause.

The discussion which his talk was not so encouraging. Rash statements and hot headed assertions that authority members should be summarily conveyed to the headsman *en bloc* are indicative

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of the lack of thought which is so common in British librarianship today. Further evidence of this is that in the election of the G.L.D. committee for 1957, no more than 605 voting papers were returned out of 1958 issued. It must be realized that the achievement of a national library service on paper will be meaningless unless each member of an informed and constructively active profession is ready to work like a slave to make a high standard of service a fact at each service point in the country.

Commenting on the attempt Mr. Bryon of Eccles is making to launch a large scale investigation of our present library services, Mr. Tynemouth's attitude was one of doubt about the value of surveys in general and of this project in particular. But it seems to me that if the ideal of a successful national library service is to be achieved, there must be more factual analysis of our present services so that their failings will not be perpetuated in a new national service. I believe that we must seriously and constructively consider our professional aims and methods so that the librarian of the future will have an active individual idea of library service as part of the economic, educational and cultural life of the nation. Without such a positive approach to our work, the present "point of no return" could easily become a point of no departure for the future.

ASSISTANCE TO STAFF—3

Tony Shearman

On cold and wet winter days, most people will have said at some time: "Let's chuck it all and go to the South Seas!" Fathers are particularly prone to this and to the desire to get away (with the family) once and for all. "This country has had it," they say, "there's not room for us all." Generally these statements are not literal; but despite this an ever increasing number of people are emigrating from this country.

The decision to emigrate brings a host of problems. Some of the people come to the library for the answers. They want a book telling them what it is like out there; how wages, cost of living, social facilities compare with this country; and they want the information to be recent. Publishers are slowly realising that the demand is sufficient for them to risk issuing books on the various countries concerned: two such being *Venturing to Canada* by R. Dorien and *Portrait of New Zealand* by D. Hall, both published in 1955; while a new reference book *The British Commonwealth* (Europa Publications, Ltd., £5 5s., 1956) brings up-to-date information about the Commonwealth in one volume. It claims to contain "concise, dependable information about a unique experiment in international co-operation involving over a quarter both of the land area of the globe and of the world's population." The plan is based on *Europa* and *Orbis* with the usual features—the statistical survey, political set-up and the lists of academic institutions (though for any specific enquiry, you would use *Yearbook of the Universities of the Commonwealth*), publishers, societies, libraries, etc.; but with the addition of initialed articles on the Commonwealth as a whole, and on the geography, history, economy and relations with the rest of the Commonwealth, of a particular country.

There is also the *Empire and Commonwealth Yearbook* and, of course, yearbooks of the various individual countries such as the *Yearbook of the Commonwealth of Australia*.

GUILELESS IN GAZA

Council Notes—March 14

An agenda as gentle-looking as any spring lamb ushered in education as the lion of the March Council meeting. It *was* coincidental that the party of observers present were students from the N.W. Polytechnic School of Librarianship, though more hardened political observers might have been led to suspect deliberate stage management.

Minor skirmishes between the Education and Finance Committee have been known before. Now Council seems to resemble the Gaza strip with these two bodies poised bomb-in-hand along either side, while the Press and Publications committee tread the delicate path between like a United Nations force altogether unsure about the worth of treaties and gentlemanly agreements.

On this occasion the Education Committee, whose declining balances deter them not from philanthropic gestures, wished to increase the payments to compilers, editors and revisers of correspondence courses. Finance Committee took the view that the Education Committee's request was premature, a new scale having been recommended and adopted only last September. Defer for six months, said Finance, and we will review all fees and charges connected with correspondence courses.

When the committees reported to Council the fight was on for the floating votes carried by the members of the Press and Publications Committee. "Nobody likes us, nobody ever adopts our recommendations," came the cry from the Chairman and some members of the Education Committee, but it seemed unlikely that Council would be swayed by this straightforward sob-stuff, and Mr. Phillips fatalistically forecast the result by announcing as he rose, "When I speak on financial matters the motion is always lost." So it was, but only by one vote after a recount, and undoubtedly the Education Committee live to fight again another day, even if that day be six months away.

More peacefully received from the Education Committee was the news that the Martin Award of 5 guineas is to go to Mrs. B. Cracknell (Hunts. County) for the best result by a correspondence course student in the November First Professional Examination. Proposals on the draft syllabus for the Registration Examination which appeared in the March *Record* are to be considered at the next meeting. Progress was reported on a new course for the Teacher/Librarian Certificate, which Mr. Phillips believed to be "another attempt to lower professional standards." Mr. Thompson, an oral tutor for this certificate, admitted to having been often exasperated when trying to explain librarianship to people who don't understand, but never quite so exasperated as now, when he had to explain to "people who don't understand to a more advanced degree."

The Press and Publications Committee reported that Dr. Walford has decided to relinquish the editorship of the A.A.L. Guides. Council heard this news with the greatest regret and asked that their thanks be conveyed to Dr. Walford. All students owe him a debt of gratitude, for these publications could not have been compiled and produced so cheaply and well but for the help voluntarily given by an already busy man. From Publications Committee also came news of two experimental filmstrips to be produced on charging methods and library fittings and furniture.

The Council is to make a donation of 5 guineas to the John Rylands Library Fund as a token of its appreciation of the value of this library over a long period to students of librarianship and bibliography, and is to ask the L.A. Council to make a further donation (which it has since refused to do.—*Ed.*). Several of the A.A.L. divisions are starting subscription funds.

The Policy Committee, at its first meeting for over a year, discussed grading of public library posts and negotiations between NALGO and the L.A., and felt that the Staff Side of the N.J.C. should be informed that all our members are not wildly happy about their conduct of negotiations on behalf of librarians. The Council agreed to the Policy Committee's recommendation that the L.A. should be pressed to issue a report from the Reorganisation Sub-Committee which was set up over a year ago to deliberate on a new structure for the Asso-

ciation, and which has since been as silent and ominous as any Star Chamber. (The L.A. has now agreed to this and a report was in the April *Record*.—Ed.). Concern was expressed at the small percentage of votes returned in professional elections, and the A.A.L. is to attempt to remedy this in respect of its own elections.

Members of the Council received with their papers a memorandum by the Vice-President, Mr. Tomlinson, urging the need for up-to-date job classifications applicable to different kinds and sizes of libraries, and a motion is to be forwarded to the L.A. urging them to prepare and publish such schedules, containing definitions and examples of duties appropriate to various posts and the minimum qualifications necessary to them.

Under an item dealing with the Annual General Meeting, the Honorary Secretary reported that no motions had been received, and Messrs. Pocklington and Phillips hurriedly conferred to produce what can only be called "a fast one" to remedy this unusual situation. Mr. W. G. Smith, inaudible and choked more by sweets than emotion, rose to suggest that the motion was out of order. Mr. Pocklington spoke more often than has ever been allowed by Standing Orders, and Council were informed that the President was "letting him have a bit of rope" ("object unspecified" said an aside). Consultation on the platform resulted in the motion being ruled out of order, and Mr. Pocklington was given until midnight to frame another motion or gather another eight signatures for his original one, which was basically an amendment to the Association rules.

The meeting closed on a lighter note, if that is possible, with Mr. A. C. Jones pleading for a change of buttons in the lift at Chaucer House. Students wishing to visit the L.A. Library or the Education Department are still called upon to press buttons marked respectively *Society of Genealogists* and *Museums Association*. The L.A. House and Library Committee is to be informed that these two bodies left Chaucer House some time ago.

ERIC MOON.

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Letter from a reader: Re my books. I'm afraid we have a lot of sickness with the children and I destroyed one of them. However, I still have one left. The doctor has been coming for months and I honestly think that it's better to burn them.

Your Letters

—are so numerous these days that the Editor must reserve the right to shorten them sometimes. He hopes that this will not stop anyone writing—but please be as brief as possible.

Snow White and the Seven Sins

A noteworthy point concerning fairy-tales is made by S. J. Teague, of Chelsea, in the letter published in the April number of the *Assistant Librarian*.

For many years now children have been terrorized and their personalities insidiously undermined by the baneful influence of the Fairy Tale. How many young readers of *Jack and the Beanstalk* have been encouraged to set foot upon the path of crime by the success of Jack's exploits in theft from the giant's castle? How many stepmothers have been made unhappy by the atmosphere of sullen distrust surrounding them, after a prolonged perusal of *Snow White* and *Cinderella*? And the numbers of children who have refused ever to visit their grandmothers again, fearing the perils consequent upon Red Riding Hood's journey—these statistics speak for themselves. Sometimes these unhappy results linger on into adult life; many of us know the girl with the "Bluebeard" complex who refuses to marry, or the man who demands that his wife spin five skeins of yarn before she be allowed any supper.

I would urge that not only Fairy Tales, but Nursery Rhymes be removed from the Children's Section, thus obviating any possibility of corruption from the reckless improvidence of *Mother Hubbard*, the juvenile delinquency of *Tom the Piper's Son*, and the antisocial behaviour of *Georgy-Porgy*. Had I time, I would write at more length on this important subject, but I must now return to removing several plates of a very doubtful character from a book on the biological functions of plant life.

DAPHNE R. CASTELL, *Imperial Forestry Institute, University of Oxford.*

Age Barrier

Thank you Mr. Davinson for voicing your opinion on the Library Association ruling that a person who has passed Registration is not eligible for election to the Register until he or she reaches the age of 23.

I must heartily endorse your sentiments as I am personally affected by this ruling. I became a library assistant at the age of 17 and was fortunate enough to have passed Registration by the time I was 20.

I was assured that my age would be no disadvantage when applying for an A.P.T. post, but, after writing numerous applications, this has proved to be a fallacy. It appears that I must be contented to wait a further two years before obtaining that A.P.T. post. Perhaps in the meantime the Library Association will remove this age barrier—I hope so.

PAULINE GODSALL, *Birmingham Public Libraries.*

I know Mr. Davinson is aware of the fact, but I should not like some of us to get the impression from his letter that the appropriate qualification for appointment or promotion to APT Grades I—III is the A.L.A., because it is not. Para. 28(b) of the Charter and the list of examinations issued by the Local Government Examinations Board make it quite clear that as far as the L.A. is concerned, the Registration Examination by itself is the appropriate qualification.

This is, however, a minimum qualification and it is open to employing authorities to prescribe such additional requirements for posts in their service as they think fit. If they should wish, for example, to stipulate age and service, one method is to insist on the possession of the A.L.A., against which there is no appeal on "the letter of the law."

If any of your readers, on the other hand, are occupying APT posts and, fulfilling the examination and service requirements, are being paid on a grade lower than APT purely on account of age, I would strongly advise them to seek the support of their local NALGO Branch to persuade their employers to pay

the appropriate rate and not to make use of cheap labour.

On this question of the age requirement for the Associateship, your readers may be interested in the requirements of other professional bodies in this respect (some of which have definite age requirements, while others so draw their regulations that, while no age is stipulated, you cannot in practice fulfil all the requirements for registration before a certain age). They are as follows:—

Architect 22.
Auctioneer and Estate Agent 21.
Barrister 21.
Chartered secretary 21.

Chartered surveyor 21.
Accountant 20-22 (AIMTA 22,
AACCA 20, ASAA 21, ACA 21,
CA 22).
Solicitor 21.

M. T. SLEIGHTHOLM, *Senior Assistant, Leeds Public Library.*

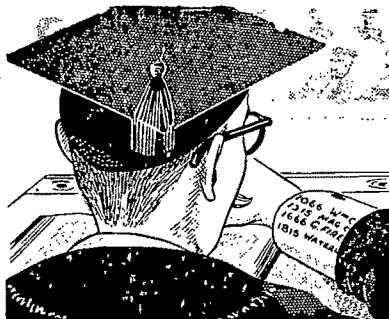
A Quarterly Record?

I disapprove of R. M. Lyle's proposal for the *L.A. Record* to come out quarterly and for it to be optional—surely we librarians should all be aware of the value of periodicals for the acquisition of new knowledge and comments on existing theories.

Although often initially put off by the fact that the *Record* is said to be boring, many of us at present are inveigled into reading it simply because we have paid for it, and later form the habit of reading with interest, it and other library periodicals. Were the purchase optional, fewer would form the custom of reading any library literature at all, with a consequent stagnation in outlook. Those who do find the *Record* dull are those who have a narrow viewpoint of librarianship and should not be allowed to dominate future L.A. policy. Even so it is doubtful if the reduction in the number of journals printed would make any great difference to the financial burden that is borne by the members, as the more articles there are consumed, the cheaper the commodity to the consumer eventually; and the amount of money spent on posting *Liaison* to members would still remain a constant item.

Mr. Lyle also suggests that in certain circumstances, examination fees should be reduced. The student who is sitting an examination for the tenth time needs to have his paper marked just as carefully as the student who is sitting for the first time, so why should fees be reduced for resits? Few students would claim to have worked as hard as possible for any examination, and it does not seem reasonable for the general membership continually to subsidise people who, on their own admittance, have not worked as much as they could have. Those students who are sitting for an examination for the seventh time or so should not be recompensed for their trials, but should rather be condemned for not doing enough work or for obstinately persevering in something which past

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experience has shown them to be incapable of achieving. In any case the new fees are not excessive and are in line with current examination fees in other institutions where students have not initially had a chance to earn any previous salary.

KATHLEEN J. EGGLESTON, *Scottish School of Librarianship*.

Distracted, Desperate Creatures

"Why do librarians *mutter* to themselves all the time?" I was once asked as a junior. Mr. Bengé's masterly analysis in the April *Assistant* of the eerie half-world of unfulfilled desires which he believes to exist behind the mask of "Librarian," combined with your other contributors' comments on the effect of the poor creature's habits on the general public, prompt me to view Mr. Forshaw's outburst against non-virile librarians with deep concern. Does he not protest a little too much? And it is not, surely, too far-fetched to detect a certain over-emphasis here and there—"They can have their symphony concerts and what-not later in the day," he says, staggering back from that yawning gulf, the final ignominy of the Old Boys' Third XV.

We remember the ultimate fate of the virile hero of Mr. Kingsley Amis' aptly named novel *That uncertain feeling*: an impartial observer would be forgiven for linking his flight to the N.C.B. to certain sinister references in the letters of both Mr. Forshaw and Mr. Lyle. "Parading as happy pigs," indeed, and evidently treading the primrose path to the everlasting bonfire. However, we, and Mr. Bengé, may take heart. At least one of the "literary ones" has attracted the attention of the literary world as a creator, rather than as a distributor. Mr. John Braine, who has been hailed as the latest of the angry young men, is himself a librarian.

But, despite this heartening example, there is a certain feeling of desperation in the air; it would be interesting, for example, to know whether the not uncommon advertisements in the "Situations Wanted" column of the *Bookseller* . . . "Young librarian, knowledge print, etc. . . . requires post in publishing . . ." is symptomatic of a general flight of angry young librarians, if not to the mines, then to new pastures?

Perhaps there is quite a simple solution after all. "Why are librarians such distracted, desperate creatures?" Could it be that salaries have something to do with it?

DAVID LASKEY, *Northumberland County Libraries*.

Are Librarians Human?

Mr. Bengé will have done a great service to all those who are possessed of intelligence and imagination, if his "Thoughts for the Conference" keep such people out of librarianship from the start. His words should be reprinted and distributed to every school and youth-employment agency in the country. It's a pretty hopeless prospect that he offers to a young librarian, young men are unwilling to abandon *all* hope, however much their elders may advise that grey course, and there is something very bitter in the tone with which Mr. Bengé slashes at the evasive squirmings of the trapped anti-librarians and writers manqués.

One morsel of very cold comfort is offered; we are supposed to calm our anxieties by reflecting that other professions are as terrifying as ours in their power to turn people into occupational caricatures of themselves. It is a hard thing to believe, but makes matters worse if accepted. The recent experience of the Winchester conference, drives one to the conclusion that *most of us are inhuman after all*. Our cards of identity were blank when we came to Winchester, and blank, but rather grubby, when we left.

Only one answer presents itself, and the predicament makes it a drastic one; but if it is the same outside, where is one to escape to?

JOHN A. CUNLIFFE, *Student North Western Polytechnic Library School*.

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Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians
(Section of the Library Association)

EDITOR: W. G. SMITH.

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Librarians ARE Human

Reflections of a novice at the A.A.L. Conference

N. Saunders White, Kensington Public Library

In his summing up of the Conference at Winchester, the Editor stated in his opening sentence, "What good is a Conference?" Before I attended the Conference these were my very words, except to add, . . . "especially of librarians!" The very thought of an organised gathering of library types sends cold shivers up my spine. For 10 years or so I've been watching them climb the ladder of fame, powerless myself most of the time to clamber even on to the second rung. I divided them into three groups—the so-called professionals, toothy, horsey females, frigid and forbidding. The males thick-lensed, balding, with food stained suits and nicotined fingers, muttering Cutter or rambling Ranganathan, dull, boring and all of them slightly demented. Then there are the unapproachable librarians, the ones that read papers at L.A. Conferences, that write textbooks and one can imagine them sitting Proust-like in padded offices, handling tenderly with signet-ringed fingers, morocco-bound books and handmade paper—aloof and far-off; awe-inspiring and inhuman.

Now, can you imagine how ghastly a liberal mixture of these creatures would be? And a week-end of it, too! Well, I could imagine it, and that is why I make it a rule never to mix with these professional types excepting the very small proportion of sane, healthy ones that do,



LIBRARIANS
ARE
HUMAN
The Editor's
bedroom
during an
informal
conference
session.

fortunately, exist and upon whom in my opinion, the future of Librarian-ship rests. These few (some of them actually F.L.A.'s), I am happy to number among my friends.

It was the insistence of these few that brought me to the Conference. You see, there is another reason for my reluctance to mix,—a personal one, in fact, a little matter of humility. If you haven't already guessed,—I am not qualified. I also have a conscience. How could I possibly have the affrontery to be in the same *room* with such a chatter of chartered?—Me?, with my insignificant 5 passes G.C.E. and Entrance! However, my friends insisted that it would do my soul good and might even help with the exams. So to please them more than anything else, I went. To be more precise, *we* went; in *my* car. (A significant point here, I think,—only the unqualified G.D. can afford to run a car!).

My silence during the journey down was construed as a doubt as to the mechanical ability of the car to reach Winchester, but really I was still inclined to think that I was in for a miserable week-end, surrounded by egg-heads. Nevertheless, my red monster rumbled and roared all its 20 h.p. over the Surrey hills with never a falter, and arrived safely to the accompaniment of up-raised eyebrows of earlier arrivals at King Alfred's College (expecting, no doubt, 3 deputies and a chief at the very least!).

As we queued up to register, I thought my suspicions were about to be confirmed, when we were issued with name-tags. *Name-tags*! I almost laughed aloud! I looked around. Yes, there we all were, tagged and docketed, labelled and wrapped, like a gathering of prize cattle. In fact, I mentioned so to my companion who agreed, and we both laughed as he suggested that it might be of some use as at least we would know whom to avoid! I did not feel quite so miserable then, at least I had found *one* person who was normal. Later on I had my first shock. I somehow thought the name had a familiar look—light suddenly dawned—I had been speaking to Tynemouth! A name I had seen more than once at the end of learned articles in various library periodicals! A name I thought was just a pseudonym for yet another "professional type" with a head full of cobwebs. But I was staggered. He was normal, healthy, ordinary—like myself—it was impossible! Revelations were not to end there, however, for among the tagged and docketed, chatting naturally was Miss Willson, my tutor for entrance. I must have looked so taken aback that she actually spoke to me! I then found she was not only Miss Willson, F.L.A., President of A.L.A., but also just plain Miss Willson a charming, friendly *person*.

Then there was the fabulous J. Binder, the name I associate always as the Editor of those curiously tinted sheets of late and happy memory, who I thought of as some weird ancient in tweeds. Far from it, in fact I got on very well with her till I was escorted firmly by my F.L.A. friends to view other "names" in the profession. And there they all were: Surridge and McColvin, Tomlinson and Smith, Clough and Lockwood and scores more. Due to them I came away from the Conference with a new conception of librarians en masse. They *are*, generally speaking, human and approachable! Qualities that I had thought were the last to be associated with "professional" librarians. Strange how an idea built up over twelve long years can be so rudely shattered in such a short week-end.

Regarding the actual sessions, I shall not go into detail as they were reported accurately by the Editor in the May issue. I shall say that I enjoyed them, my group being conducted mainly by a Mr. Bill, with a confidence bred by years of thought and experience.

But I must mention the College visit. On Saturday afternoon most of us visited either the College, Cathedral or Southampton. I decided to see the College, and most of us who were in my coach agreed we had chosen wisely for we were shown round by W. de Wykeham himself, or so it seemed, who took us with obvious delight all over the College; "his College!" . . . "There, look; there's the bell, look, what they rings to bring 'em to meals, there it is look!" . . . and later . . . "and the little boys 'ad to eat all their meals off these boards here, see, there they are look. They had their meat in the middle and put their taties round the edge to keep the gravy in, see!" I wished I had a tape recorder with me, he was a wonderful old man.

Now I come to a most important point, and I feel I must use this opportunity to bring to light certain aspects of the Conference which appear to go unnoticed or forgotten. It is an aspect which never gets official recognition and yet it plays not the least important part towards the success of the week-end. I refer, of course, to the amount of preparation and work that appears to be done far into the night by various organisation and discussion leaders and others to ensure the success and smooth-running of the Conference. Both Friday evening and Saturday as I was retiring early, to be refreshed for the next day's sessions, I could hear in various rooms people talking, walking up and down, and quietly humming to themselves, doubtless preparing for the next day's discussions. In fact the amount of sleep lost during the evening showed in the faces of many the next day. Very few people realise just how much some delegates give of their own time during the week-end to make it worthwhile. On Sunday morning, for instance, coming out of my room, I met one delegate who had tried unsuccessfully several times during the night and early morning to prevent several of his colleagues from overtaxing themselves by these rigorous evening preparations. Do you know those fellows wouldn't hear of it? They pushed him out and actually shut the door in his face, telling him to go to bed, they were going to continue whatever anyone said!

At the final summing-up session I noticed that several delegates were suffering from lack of sleep, some even appeared to be under doctor's orders as they surreptitiously consumed sips from what seemed to be bottles of medicinal fluid (shrub cordial?). Stout fellows, I thought. If I could have overcome my own nervousness, I might have ventured to pass a resolution thanking these people, particularly for their activities on our behalf—even if most of us were prevented from sleeping by their informal discussions.

To sum up my impressions of this, my first conference, I can say with certainty that it won't be my last. That it proved to me that librarians *can* be human, I repeat this statement because I believe it to be a very important one—if librarians can be human then there is some possibility that we may be a profession after all.

—That there are worse libraries than my own, somewhere . . . !

—That Mr. McColvin (Junior) could top the Palladium bill any time he wanted to.

—That I must get qualified post haste.

—That to get further than grade 3, I shall need not only my hard-earned G.C.E. and entrance, but A.L.A., F.L.A., and an honours degree, too!

And finally (in all seriousness) an excellently organised week-end, in an absence of formality, many new friends made and one step nearer the compleat librarian.

YOUR Letters

**For
Mr. Callander**

Thank you for printing Mr. Callander's refreshing constructive and uncomplicated remarks (*April Assistant*).

Being a student for Final Admin. at the moment, I was encouraged by his comments on the form of this examination. In my view, the level of one's maturity of thought and approach will never be satisfactorily measured in such an essentially practical profession as ours, by examining members a second time over (for remember they've already been examined on detailed matters at Registration stage) on such matters as *Development of Swedish Libraries*, *Staff Nomenclature*, *the History of Lending Libraries*, and *the Conduct of Architectural Competitions*.

There comes a time in everyone's professional life when a certain level of responsibility has been reached—one may be a Chief Assistant, a Branch Librarian or a Department Head. For many at this level, responsibilities don't really cease when the library doors close, and in fact time spent in study might be put to far better use in critically reading some of the contents of one's library stock.

Extended periods of study may make one an extremely good reciter of facts—but no reader will be consoled when asking advice about a book to be told "Well of course I don't know much about it—I haven't read it—I'm studying, you know!"

Mr. Callander suggests an interview as a means of judging calibre and maturity on admin. matters. Carry it further and let an examining committee come and watch a candidate at work and see what he's making of his job. Let them see, in fact, whether he's a good practical librarian, which is really all that matters. Such a method of examination would certainly cause all candidates to apply themselves to the jobs they're doing with an eye to disposing of a few unnecessary routines.

Best of all, the readers would ultimately benefit, particularly if the senior assistants to whom they went for help, knew more about the insides of the books on their shelves.

FRANK BAGULEY, *Berkshire County Library*.

**And
Against**

Mr. Callander is under a misapprehension: rural libraries do not necessarily provide second class service, as he implies. The reader living in the rural areas of some parts of this country has access to County Library services at least the equal of most Municipal Libraries, and often infinitely better than the independent Libraries in neighbouring small towns.

No-one who works in a County Library would deny that even the best County has a long way to go before it reaches perfection. There are good County Libraries and bad County Libraries, just as there are good and bad Municipal Libraries—but I wonder how good Municipal Libraries were thirty-seven years after they were started.

GEOFFREY SMITH.

**Virile
Males**

Surely Mr. Forshaw's letter takes first prize so far this year for confusion of thought? If split duties and Saturday afternoon work are a bar to recruitment, by all means let them be abolished; but Mr. Forshaw seems to say they are a bar only to hairy-kneed rugger types and clean-limbed cricketers (these are some clichés you didn't use, Mr. Forshaw), and the implication is that librarianship is the loser thereby. May I say that if the inverted intellectual snobbery apparent

in the remark about "symphony concerts and what-not" is typical of the hearties, the opposite is the case?

Among my librarian friends I number people who go mountaineering, running, walking for long distances, and numerous types who daily risk their necks in sports cars and on large motor-cycles. Many of them would probably find a quiet Saturday afternoon's cricket a trifle tame. I can say this quite without bias, since I myself take almost no physical recreation, and would undoubtedly incur Mr. Forshaw's strictures.

It is, I think, true that the library attracts a different masculine type from, say, the Town Hall. Psychology teaches us that there are few purely male men or female women (and experience teaches us that where such do occur they are very dull companions) and in libraries we are likely to find people of some sensitivity, little fear of solitude, and a dislike of running with the herd. That these people are effeminate I have tried to refute in the preceding paragraph.

Maybe Mr. Forshaw has been got at, as by the chap in the pub., perhaps by some of his rugger pals, and that, lacking a good case to defend libraries, he prefers to join the attack with some particularly rusty old weapons. I suggest that, next time he meets this down-the-mines or in-the-Army argument, he enquires in what way the normal office or shop affords more manly employment. Ninety per cent. of the middle class must be lacking in virility, and that's a pretty poor look-out for our women. They'd better read *Lady Chatterley* and take action accordingly.

If Mr. Forshaw is really concerned primarily with recruitment, then let him agitate as best he can for the improvement of library salaries. When these are equated with those of other local government departments, and local government salaries are really competitive, then our staffing problems will be at an end, awkward hours notwithstanding.

KENNETH THIMBLEBY, *Camberwell Public Libraries.*

Exam Fees

Further to Mr. Lyle's letter in your April issue, the examination fees are surely already excessive. Take Group "A" for example:—

	£	s.	d.
Examination entrance fee	1	11	6
Stamps and envelopes			6
Compulsory membership of the L.A. ..	4	4	0
	£5	16	0

It is difficult to see what other benefits one receives for the £4 4s. 0d., except the *L.A. Record*, a periodical generally agreed to be of monumental dullness.

G. WAKEMAN, *Travelling Librarian, Herefordshire County Library.*

Soul-less Penance

While agreeing with Mr. Ivor Kemp that much of the L.A. syllabus *can* be studied without the aid of lectures, I suggest that such a back-breaking and soul-less penance is highly undesirable.

Fellow-students in a class give each other opportunities for exchange of ideas and experience, not only in the formal lesson period, but in the intellectual freedom of the coffee breaks. The student's mind has a "positive need to brush, scrape, kindle itself, gossiping."

A degree or professional qualification gained without "ever attending any lectures at all" is hardly worth the paper it is written on. It may become a bookworm, but not a professional man who intends to "move between books and readers."

ALAN THOMAS, *Lewisham Public Libraries.*

Your Letters

Censoring Mr. O'Leary

Mr. Bengé, in April, claimed that the "real O'Leary's dead and gone"

I quote Mark Twain, with my well-known powers of misquotation, in saying that Mr. Bengé's announcement of my demise is grossly exaggerated.

I beg to inform you, sir, that I still breathe, and, despite Mr. Bengé, I surface for air more than once a year. This annual Moby Dick to which Mr. Bengé refers, is made possible by one simple fact. Its publication is assured. The cost is borne by the Borough of Dagenham. It is with dead certainties only that such authorship as I possess flourishes. By the "splendid act" does Mr. Bengé reveal that his generation reads Henley? Was he inspired to this by the announcement of "the sundown splendid and serene, death"?

I would like to number myself among the poets—I cannot write poetry. I would like to have found in libraries the material for a great novel. I have not. My other literate interests are not likely to bring me before a television audience.

To what then shall I turn? The "Library Association Record?" But there I shall find Mr. Bengé and a whole bench of tea tasters. "Why does the tea generally taste of boiled boots?" (I cannot impress too strongly on my younger brethren, the virtues of the *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*). I have great difficulty in getting even a letter published in the *Record*. My views, and a very substantial list of omissions, on the *Union List of Reference Books* (Greater London Division A.A.L.) was declined. Dr. Walford edited this publication. He also edits the *Record*. A letter to the *Record* was recently refused (but is no longer) on the grounds that it was rude to a library long hallowed by all.

I assure Mr. Bengé, that I shall continue (having no ulcers) to masquerade not as a butcher or one of the herd of "happy pigs," but just in my "splendid act" as—

J. G. O'LEARY, *Librarian, Dagenham Public Libraries.*

Dr. A. J. Walford, Editor of the Record replies:—

The Union list of reference books. I replied at the time to Mr. O'Leary's letter, agreeing with him that the *Union List* had been poorly edited. The "very substantial list of omissions" could not be incorporated since the *Union List* never went into another edition. The forthcoming *Union list of bibliographies and reference books*, edited by Miss J. M. Harries and L. M. Payne, will be a much better compilation.

Mr. O'Leary's letter to the Record was refused in its original form. With certain passages omitted, it was published in the April *Record* (p. 140). Mr. O'Leary was informed that his letter would be published with certain omissions and to this he agreed.

—and Mr. O'Leary comments:—

My letter appeared in the April *Record*. The dots represented parts that the Editor thought unfit for publication. He omitted my postscript which was this: "Out of print books—Oman—'Art of War,' wanted for 'A' Level." Which it is!

The L.A.R. seems to devote its attention to out of print "cotton-tail" series and the like.

Where Did Mother Goose Wander ?

May I use Miss Castell's remarks on nursery rhymes as an excuse to bring one of my favourite bibliographies to the notice of readers of the *Assistant Librarian*? This is Geoffrey Handley-Taylor's "*Selected bibliography of literature relating to nursery rhyme reform*" (True Aim, 1952).

Here, in four pages, may be found, chronologically arranged, references to writers as diverse as Sarah Trimmer and Nathaniel Gubbins, and the work concludes with a list of unsavoury elements to be found in the average collection of nursery rhymes. These include two cases of unlawful imprisonment, four of cursing, and one of death by shrivelling. The rest are of such a nature as to suggest that Mother Goose spent more time on the staff of the *News of the World*, possibly at the same time as Father Christmas (whose opposition to that useful device, the all-night fire, is well-known) was developing those activities which have had such socially harmful consequences in the TV give-away show.

A. C. BUBB, *National Central Library.*

Assistance to Staff

I would like to amplify the contribution *Assistance to Staff* by Mr. Shearman in the issue for May regarding information on living conditions in Commonwealth territories. The Royal Empire Society produces 38 mimeographed papers designed specially to give just the factual information on cost of living, housing, health, education, taxation, etc., that the intending applicant for a post overseas finds most useful. These papers, which cover the Commonwealth territories except Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, which have well established information services in London, are revised annually. Many public and other libraries already receive these, but further applications are welcomed.

With reference to Mr. Shearman's recommendation of the publication *The British Commonwealth*, I think it should be pointed out that it, in spite of a wealth of factual detail, suffers greatly from the inadequacy of its list of contents and its lack of index. If Librarians would be more outspoken in their criticisms of such deficiencies in quick reference books, there would be more chance of persuading publishers to remedy such defects in future editions.

DONALD H. SIMPSON, *Librarian, Royal Empire Society.*

A Lesson from Sweden

At Malmö public library, Sweden, each senior staff member is allocated two foreign library periodicals to read regularly. At the monthly staff meeting all important articles which have appeared are reviewed by each librarian concerned and a general discussion ensues.

Commenting on recent issues of the *Assistant Librarian*, one senior librarian told me that her staff was amazed and amused by the letters written on "Censorship." Sweden evidently has no such problem. There the librarian is publicly regarded as a professional person paid to select the best books for the community. The librarian is not given authority, only to have it challenged by laymen; not is he expected to choose the best books on all subjects and then hide a portion of them in the librarian's office or elsewhere. In signing a membership voucher, a reader applies to use any book purchased by the library and the parent or guardian by his countersignature accepts the librarian's selection likewise. All the Malmö copies of Kinsey are displayed on the lending department shelves, the librarian told me, and she asked the fate of copies in my library. I dared not tell her that more than a few libraries at home do not purchase this type of book presumably because they are considered unimportant, too important or too immoral, or alternatively may result in too few or maybe too many issues!

The possibility that minority pressure groups might be allowed to influence the librarian's book selection and display equally amazed the Malmö staff.

This Malmö librarian's comment on the *Assistant* was "it tends to be full of librarians' quarrels."

In the April issue of the *Assistant*, Mr. Callander writes "poor libraries . . . would not be changed by government aid," and "people who live in the country do so from choice and just as they forgo easy access to theatres and art galleries, so they *MUST* forgo a first-class library service." May 1 disagrees, at the same time accepting Mr. Callander's condemnation of poor librarians. Most people who live in the country do so by accident of birth, and most remain there because it is there that they find their livelihood. Some may prefer to live in the country for the same reasons that some town dwellers prefer to live in suburbs, but not because either choose to be without the social and cultural amenities of the city centre. Occasional Arts Council productions in rural areas have been well attended, and drama groups are quite common, but the absence of good cultural amenities makes the appreciation of them more difficult.

When there is a good country library service it is almost invariably well used. National standards, inspection and government aid have made possible in Denmark a better rural library service than we have in this more prosperous country. State-aided regional reference libraries and a state-aided bibliographical centre could help to bring nearer to the countryman the ideal of a first-class library service. State-aid could free our library systems from the procrustean bed of our geographical counties and could make possible administrative library units comprising social catchment areas centred on a nodal point (to use McColvin's phrases) still functioning as part of our local government system. Even if the resulting areas had to be smaller than McColvin suggested, they would at least be cohesive. A first-class library service for the countryman is a possibility. It would be a pity if we sacrificed him on the issue desk of the large town library.

Meanwhile since state aid is not immediately forthcoming, we could have regional or "all county" reference libraries (and regional or "all county" service to industry) by co-operation. These services might lead to Government aid. What other countries can do with national standards and Government aid we also can do, and our poor libraries could thereby be a good deal better.

K. R. TOMLINSON, *Loughborough School of Librarianship.*

Is Reading Necessary?

May I express my appreciation of Mr. Brian Selby's article in your March issue on Ranganathan's theories? To one who, like myself, has had neither the energy to read the master nor the opportunity to hear him, these precepts and reflections come as a welcome blessing. But does the great man himself really support the question:—

"Can we conscientiously believe that we are *instilling* the reading habit into the lower I.Q.'s and assuring the *proper* use of the leisure of the people by providing libraries which are often nothing more than collections of entertainment reading?" (My italics as they say).

Is reading books such a vital and necessary habit for lower I.Q.'s *et al*? Can we conscientiously believe that the missing 75 per cent. from our doors are all souls in need of conversion. No one will disagree that reading is a necessary tool and accomplishment in modern life; it is also a pleasant habit for those many who enjoy it. Again, no one could reasonably deny the purposes and usefulness of the public library service—facts, information, study facilities, the provision of technical, practical, and imaginative literature for both adults and children—all incontestably necessary. But granted all this, reading is still a means to an end and not an end in itself. Many people will read when they require information or have been urged to read a particular book, but their need fulfilled they feel no further necessity to read. Television apart, their lives give them direct occupation and satisfaction enough.

As for, "Instilling the reading habit into the lower I.Q.'s", surely this is at sad variance with the opportunities for advice and guidance offered informally by a good Readers' Advisory Service. No doubt in India with the colossal problems presented by mass illiteracy, the Librarian should adopt the pedagogic

function of the Educationist, but in Great Britain how could he reconcile the increased reading of this group with such a sweeping condemnation of "Collections of entertainment reading."

"The proper use of leisure." Presumably Librarians will have the key to this mystery—they must know how books can promote a more effective use of leisure. Are we then, one wonders, as a class noticeably happier or better occupied than others. There are other means . . .

Let us have new ideas, experiments and theories by all means. Let us hope they will stimulate us to self-examination and improvement as we *march* towards the new millenium (*walking backwards* would be very uncomfortable). But please, doctors all, more realism; a sterner suppression of these polysyllabic clichés which inflate your wiser words; and above all—a little humility. Reading is not an isolated activity. It exists in relation to the total life of the individual, just as surely as intelligence itself is one feature only in a complete personality.

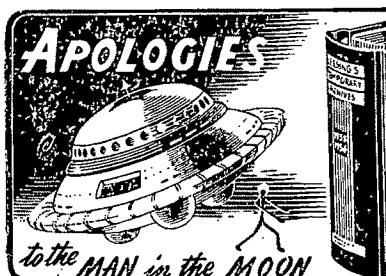
LEONARD C. BURTON.

A number of letters on an article in April about Birmingham Library have been held over to give the staff there more time to reply.

Correspondence Courses

First Professional Examination

As from October this year, the period of the above course will be extended. The next one will commence in November and prepare students for the examination in November, 1958. The closing date for applications will be September 30th. The following courses will commence at the same time as those for the Registration and Final courses. This means that there will be none in preparation for the First Professional Examination in June, 1958.



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Further information may be obtained from the Principal,

C. E. GURR, M.Sc., Ph.D.,
Secretary to the Education
Committee.

Recruiting

L. C. Guy, Lending Librarian, St. Marylebone Public Library

THERE can be few libraries in this country not faced with difficulty in recruiting staff and it may be assumed that much thought has been given to ways and means of filling staff vacancies. An opportunity to take part in a Careers Convention held at Wembley County School was offered to me, as an old pupil of the school, in early February this year. The Convention was open for two nights from 7 p.m. to 9.30 p.m., those pupils leaving school this and next summer together with their parents, were invited to attend. The "exhibitors," if one may so call the various representatives of careers, were allotted classrooms and could bring any display material they desired. Quite elaborate displays were provided by the large firms, national Boards, the Services and similar organisations, but for the professions, bodies such as the Civil Service, medicine, local government and librarianship, a desk or two sufficed. However, expecting something like this, we displayed some twenty or so large photographs illustrating the variety of work in a public library, a selection of reading lists and some annual reports.

This then was the simple lay-out—what were the consequences? My wife, ex-children's librarian, came with me to the first night, since we had no idea what the response would be, and to deepen our gloom it poured with rain all day and had not ceased by 7 p.m. After a quick tour of the Convention we returned to our classroom at 6.50 p.m., mentally bracing ourselves to see other exhibitors rushed off their feet whilst we attracted little attention, and waited. Five minutes later, prior to the official opening time, we had our first enquirer, a mother and daughter together with, we presumed, an aunt. It was obvious from the speed with which they had reached us that their interest was pre-formed, and we were duly heartened. We had agreed beforehand that we would enumerate the various snags to the profession first of all and this was a sound basis since it gave us the opportunity to discover if either the child or parent had considered them. If they had, and were still interested, then we assumed the interest was serious and explained the conditions of service, the examinations, the type of work and the various types of library in some detail. One factor which proved an obstacle in some cases was the necessary educational standard required for entry into the profession, particularly the study of a foreign language as this ultimate necessity seemed not to be known to either parents or children. The case of a child being sent to college to become a librarian after graduation occurred and as the girl concerned was taking several languages, it was possible to point to many openings. The parents realised that an aptitude for languages was likely to be an asset but from that point they knew of no particular steps that could be taken for her to make the best of her qualifications. Of the various branches where languages would be a benefit the girl was most attracted to the B.B.C. libraries.

During the first evening we spoke to seven children and their parents, several others looked at the photographs and exhibits but did not remain to enquire further. The second evening we added a further ten names to our list. This may not seem many but it must be realised that these seventeen wished to know *all* about librarianship, and we found that a quarter of an hour at least was needed for each enquirer so that by 9.30 p.m. each evening we were utterly exhausted, having had barely twenty minutes free on either session. We reached several conclusions from this experience and these I will now discuss.

The scheme of a Convention with live representation of careers seemed eminently satisfactory, particularly so in our case where only by word of mouth can one illustrate the profession. It does not lend itself to displays of material which would give the recruit some idea of what the work will be. The parents were satisfied, feeling that they had received individual attention, had been able to ask any questions to assist in their decision and to discover the suitability of their child to the proposed career. From the librarian's point of view we were able to assess the suitability of the child and therefore whether or not to encourage her. During the interview our questions were directed mainly at the child in an effort to encourage her to talk and state opinions, thoughts and interests. Several of the parents at first tried to head off this approach by stepping in and answering for the child, but by persisting in the direct approach we overcame this and managed to get the child speaking for herself. (I must interpolate here that the "child" in all cases bar one was female, although the school is co-educational).

Inevitably, some of the parents were endeavouring to fit their daughter into the quiet, scholastic surroundings of a librarian since she was reserved, fond of books and not very strong! Our answer to this was late hours, almost continuous standing and constant contact with people (apart, of course, from certain special types of library). However, it appeared that our picture of librarianship was more acceptable to the child than the parent, that it was only the latter who imagined it a quiet, sheltered life. A possible reason for this may be that most of the children used a public library and were acquainted with its general atmosphere, whereas the parents were not.

A fondness for reading was in most cases the origin of the urge to be a librarian, and time and again we emphasised that this was not enough. Equally important, probably more so in the case of public library work, is the desire and ability to mix with all kinds of people, to be interested in them and their requirements. This point was willingly accepted but did not seem to have occurred to the recruits or their parents.

Awkward Hours—and Libraries

The question of aptitude was of great interest and had obviously been given consideration by the parents even if in a negative way from the librarianship point of view. The child was not good at mathematics, not interested in science, yet had a good grounding in most subjects without being brilliant. Of course, this probably covers the vast majority of school leaving children, but the lively interest, the child with some sense of awareness was the one we were looking for, not the drifter. Having talked with the child generally, the next stage was studying and without exception all the enquirers realised that there were several years of study ahead of them after leaving school. Not one of the parents was aware of the possibility of obtaining grants to attend library school, or of a full-time course of study on the subject. Most were worried at the prospect of the child working late on two or three nights and spending at least one other at an evening class. We explained that classes were run at various times during the day so that librarianship students were not asked to sacrifice one or two of their valuable free nights. One girl had, however, discovered from a friend, presumably already working in a library, that the authority would not adjust hours of work so that staff could attend classes during the day. If this is so, then of course, that authority is doing little to assist in recruiting for itself. The stages of the examination syllabus did not seem to be too frightening to any of the girls, and most parents seemed to think that the passing of the Registration

examination would be within the capabilities of their child.

By far the most awkward problem came at the end of a session with those really set on the idea of librarianship as a career. The invariable request was to whom should the parents refer with a view to obtaining a post? One or two wished to work locally and we referred them to the County Librarian of Middlesex. Most of the candidates either through the advice of their parents or their own personal investigations, wanted to work in a London library. Possibly the chances of promotion seemed better in a larger library sited more or less on one spot as against a County system of 5 or 6 staff in many scattered places, but we carefully explained the considerable amount of movement that takes place within the profession when seeking posts after qualification. The prospect of wider experience in the London libraries with their many departmental activities must, however, be considered the major attraction. One consideration against working locally was mentioned by several girls, this being the fear of embarrassment at having to attend to friends and neighbours and even late school-friends when working in the immediate vicinity of home. We did mention the outstanding London libraries with reasonable ease of access to those living in or around Wembley, and in addition referred parents to the Secretary of the Library Association for any further advice at a later date. Each enquirer was also given the Library Association's pamphlet, "The Library Profession." The lack of uniformity in conditions of service other than a 38-hour week made it difficult to state precisely what the new entrant would find herself doing or how she would be trained and what facilities she would be granted in studying. We were often pressed for an outright recommendation as to which was the best authority to approach and had to spend some minutes explaining the absence of any "best" authority.

One case proved most interesting and worth reporting here as probably typical of a common opinion of librarianship. The father, a youngish man, came with his daughter who was extremely keen on becoming a librarian. The parent was even more keen on discouraging her, thinking the career offered little of interest, and no prospects.

For over half-an-hour we chatted and answered his questions—salary scales—study facilities—how long had I been in the profession—what did I do all day? what would his daughter do for the first six months or so—what was the work of a qualified librarian, and so on. We won his confidence and interest, explained some of the highlights of our own careers, spoke of the various departments in the larger libraries and eventually he departed quite prepared to back his daughter in her own enthusiastic approach. This parent served to show the abysmal lack of knowledge concerning a librarian's work which must prove perhaps the greatest discouragement in recruiting, for it must be assumed that the child, even though very interested, would have been discouraged by her father from taking up his career.

A point noted by several families was the reasonable standard of salary for the new entrant and its range for the unqualified; this was a

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bit of a surprise, but when compared with other careers represented, proved correct. The APT salaries for a girl passing her Registration examination at about 22 to 25 also seemed acceptable and the lower reaches of the APT grades after that but there was some comment on the lack of return for studying beyond the A.L.A. stage and taking the Final examination.

However, returning to the experiment, we felt from later comments that we had had some extra success and closeness of contact because we were two fairly young people still retaining the enthusiasm of youth for our chosen profession and this allowed an easier approach by the child. She did not feel herself being disposed of by a committee of parents discussing the matter with their own contemporaries. Which brings me to the final point. We were closetted with three representatives of local government; they received very few enquiries indeed. They had no display material but were VERY SENIOR OFFICERS, under the circumstances of this convention I would say an error of judgment. We endeavoured to be quietly enthusiastic, but not forward, to be efficient and decided in our opinions and to give neither "big business" sales-talk nor back-slapping bon-homie. We were prepared to go down fighting, and to our surprise and delight found this almost phenomenal interest. Perhaps others in co-operation with their educational authority will be encouraged to experiment in this manner because we are now quite sure that the recruits exist and the greatest disability is lack of contact and guidance. With the general advent of school libraries and the greater emphasis on them it does seem that it is the parents who have to be converted to allowing their children to enter the profession and not the children themselves who have to be encouraged. Are we being too optimistic? Of course, the seventeen children have not yet left school, so that our final record cannot be completed, but at least three are very interested, having sought further assistance from me since the Convention, and even that, from one Convention, would make the two evenings very well spent.

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MOBILE LIBRARIES The Last Five Years

By C. T. Nicholls, Superintendent, Travelling Library Service

West Riding County Library

The growing popularity of the travelling library, as a comparatively modern medium for book provision, is evidenced by the increasing number of vehicles which are being operated by both County and Municipal authorities throughout the country. The post-war difficulties in providing buildings for library purposes has doubtless given much impetus to the travelling library movement, but it is no exaggeration to say that the intrinsic value of this form of service is the principal reason for their widespread popularity. A cursory glance at the pages of library periodicals—not to mention annual reports—demonstrates the great potential of the travelling library, and in so far as service to the reader living in rather isolated areas is concerned, it represents the answer to an hitherto unsolved problem. Indeed, the travelling library is now accepted as the only effective method of providing a service to those people who do not enjoy the amenities of community life. The number of County Library authorities who have not already embarked upon, or who are not seriously contemplating, the inauguration of a travelling library service, must be small—the movement is so much in favour at present that even many municipal authorities are rapidly acquiring vehicles in order to provide a service to new centres of population which ultimately, and when circumstances are more propitious, will need branch libraries.

During the past five years the West Riding County Library has added seven vehicles of varied types and sizes to its existing fleet, which (including vehicles now being built) numbers twenty-three. In fact the size of the fleet warranted the appointment some five years ago of the author of this article to his present post—designated as Superintendent of the Travelling Library Service—and as far as is known, the position is a unique one; no parallel appears to exist elsewhere in the country. One may well broach the question “What do I do?” My duties are manifold, and a detailed account would only serve to bore the readers of this article, but as a specialist officer, I feel that some information about my work may be of interest to others. I share with my Chief responsibility for the design of new vehicles in accordance with the changing trends in commercial vehicle practice, and I am responsible for the planning of routes and the inauguration of new service-points, the periodic inspection of vehicles in operation and those under construction, the supervision of the staff and of the vehicles with particular reference to the maintenance of the latter, the general co-ordination of the service, and assistance of the many librarians, from home and overseas, who visit the West Riding County Library to inspect our Travelling Library Service. I must, in addition, mention the fact that in the absence of either Librarian or Driver-Assistant, and provided no other reliefs are forthcoming, I fill the breach; and having performed these duties on numerous occasions, I can speak authoritatively regarding the respective tasks of each member of vehicle crews.

Although our fleet is the largest in the country, complete coverage of the County has still to be achieved, and it is hoped that the final objective will be realised within the next few years. Our vehicles fall into three categories, all specially designed for the purpose on hand. The fleet comprises thirteen small “travelling libraries” for service to hamlets and

isolated dwellings, seven "mobile branch libraries" for village service and two "semi-trailer libraries" plus one spare. All-vehicles are manned by a staff of two—a Librarian-in-charge and a Driver-Assistant; the latter, apart from driving, maintaining and cleaning the vehicle, assists with the charging, discharging and other routine clerical work.

Some authorities to-day are operating travelling libraries manned only by a Driver-Librarian, but in our opinion this system savours of false economy. Some few years ago the West Riding County Library experimented with the Driver-Librarian method, and the results were somewhat revealing. The length of time required at each service point was rather more than doubled, the total issue in the prolonged period was—contrary to expectations—less, the vehicles were invariably congested and the Driver-Librarian had little, if any, time to give assistance to readers; one result was that the non-fiction issue dropped by approximately 40 per cent. The Driver-Librarian method, if adopted by this county, would necessitate doubling the size of the fleet, and even if this was within the realms of possibility the service would be inferior to existing standards and the quality of the reading lower. Whilst on the subject of the staffing of vehicles, it is interesting to note that in our Travelling Library Service a crew is permanently allocated to a particular vehicle, whereas many authorities operate a system of interchangeability. It is considered that the permanent assignment of a particular crew to a vehicle results in a more efficient and better co-ordinated service.

During the past five years many improvements have been made in the design and equipment of travelling libraries operated by the West Riding County Library, and two features worth mention are an entrance porch on the larger type of vehicle, designed to exclude draughts and to conserve heat, and the system of lighting which uses either battery or mains electricity supply with only one set of lamps. When using the mains (by plugging in to selected points) electric heating is also available, in addition to the usual bus-type heater.

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Apart from the "go-anywhere" virtues of the travelling library, the quality of the issue as compared with static service-points deserves mention; in many instances in the West Riding of Yorkshire where vehicles have replaced village library centres, the non-fiction issues have increased threefold and frequently more. During the year 1955-56 the non-fiction issue from the travelling library service was as high as 37.7 per cent.

It may be thought that the superior service afforded by travelling libraries must of necessity be a more costly one, but provided the book stock is taken into consideration when costs are calculated, the position is that travelling libraries may even cost less than service by library centres. With the latter, large numbers of books are required in total to provide even quite meagre selections on the shelves—in other words travelling libraries require fewer books to provide larger selections to comparable populations, and therein lies the explanation of the difference in costs.

Whilst not the pioneers of the travelling library movement, the West Riding County Library has probably made as much progress and advancement in recent years as any other authority, and quite obviously there must be some sound reason for their concentration on this form of service. The three fundamentals of a good library service as we in the West Riding of Yorkshire envisage them are firstly, a good and comprehensive selection of books; secondly the employment of a qualified librarian; and thirdly the provision of adequate and attractive accommodation—it is considered that a modern and well-appointed travelling library holding a book stock ranging from 1,000—3,000 volumes, manned by a qualified librarian and a driver-assistant and making weekly or fortnightly calls, is in fact the best practical expression of these beliefs where the small community is concerned.

Many of the original arguments against travelling libraries and the recognised disadvantages known to have been associated with them have, with the passage of time and in the light of actual experience, lost much of their weight. After some ten years of operational experience with small, medium and large vehicles in the West Riding of Yorkshire, it has been proved that their vulnerability to adverse weather conditions is less than had been feared, and in fact during the winter of 1955-56 only 1.7 per cent. of the total number of 3,678 service-points were missed owing to snow, ice and fog. Weather conditions in the West Riding do vary from one extreme to the other, and road conditions in the more mountainous parts (the Pennines run the full length of the county) can be, through snow and ice, extremely treacherous. Such an achievement is in no small way due to the tenacity, courage and determination of the vehicle crews and also to their dexterous use of skid chain, shovel and grit—we are just as proud of them as are the public they serve. For obvious reasons, vehicles operating in mountainous and exposed areas under conditions of snow and ice and manned singly by a Driver-Librarian would not achieve the same progress as those doubly manned, and this appears to be further justification for the West Riding system of staffing each vehicle with a Librarian-in-charge and a Driver-Assistant. Accidents and mechanical breakdowns have in practice resulted in little interference with services; spare vehicles are always standing-by ready to take over, and additionally there is a dual-purpose delivery-vehicle-cum-mobile-library which can be switched at one day's notice from the former—and normal—role to the latter.

In the majority of West Riding villages served by travelling libraries a "local representative," who is available by telephone, has been nominated; in the event of a breakdown, or of the cancellation of the service

for any reason, the Librarian-in-charge of the vehicle communicates with this representative, who in turn, informs the borrowers. The scheme has been well accepted and does much to retain the permanent goodwill of borrowers. Another objection to service by travelling libraries, advanced by the early sceptics, was the fact that the service given was a predominantly day-time one and it was considered that the man or woman in employment would only rarely have an opportunity of using it. Practice has shown that in rural areas this difficulty is not a serious one, and day-time service appears to be satisfactory; an occasional tête-a-tête between the normally-absent borrower and the Librarian-in-charge has resulted in complete understanding regarding tastes and book requirements. In urban areas the position is different, and there is a clear need for evening service; all the large vehicles operated by the West Riding give an evening service on three days a week, and occasional extension of this practice to those small travelling libraries where an evening service is considered desirable, does much to reduce this objection to a mere shadow.

So much for the past—but what of the future? With the narrowing of the initial difference in price between petrol and diesel engined vehicles (the latter being far more economical in fuel consumption), the availability of a range of plastics for body construction purposes, the recent modifications to the Construction and Use regulations, which allow vehicles over four tons in unladen weight to be of greater dimensions than hitherto, and improvements and developments in the heating of vehicles, it is my earnest hope and belief that during the coming five years travelling libraries will become an even more familiar part of, at least, the rural scene. I believe, too, that there is still considerable scope for improved designs, so that they become in truth more clearly “mobile libraries” and less like vans fitted with shelves; it is something of an indication of failure to develop their full potentialities that they are still so widely described by both librarians and public as “library vans”!

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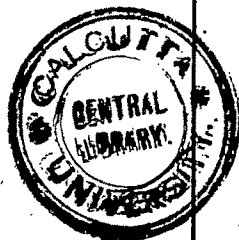
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THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians
(Section of the Library Association)

EDITOR: W. G. SMITH.

Westminster Public Libraries, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.

VOL. 50 NO. 7

JULY, 1957.

Birmingham Blues

Birmingham Librarians are trying to censor the Assistant Librarian

One would have thought that the library which so meekly accepted the recent Government banning of its import of the works of Genet would be bowing its head in shame. Instead, it wishes to extend its heavy hand to these pages.

In our April issue we printed, with the author's permission, an extract from Mr. Henry Garnett's letter to his daughter who is a full-time library school student at Ealing Polytechnic. He complained of a poor service at Birmingham Reference Library and mentioned the privileged service he received when it was discovered that he was a well-known local author.

How did Birmingham's librarians react? Did they reply vigorously that Mr. Garnett may not have had the best of service on this occasion, but that their normal standards are high and that they are proud of them? Did they point to the riches of Birmingham's unrivalled collections in some literary fields and of their national contribution to learning? Did they, in fact, do what any person skilled in dealing with the public would have done; accept the complaint and take the opportunity to make good propaganda for their library (as the young lady from Gloucester does so admirably on page 113 of this issue)?

They did not. Instead the A.A.L. Secretary received a letter from the Staff Guild saying that the facts were inaccurate (in what respect they did not say), that it was in bad taste, and demanding an *apology for the article having been printed*.

To deny the facts is one thing; to claim that an article should not have been printed because it happens to be critical is quite another, and very dangerous principle of which librarians, of all people, should beware.

Shoot the Referee

Just how far does Birmingham want to go? Would it complain to the local newspaper for printing a resident's criticism of the library? Perhaps the sporting journalists should never report a penalty being given against Aston Villa? This attitude is like that of a schoolboy at the football match who yells "foul" every

time his own team is tackled and "shoot the referee" every time they are caught infringing the rules. But most schoolboys grow up and realise that there is good and bad in every team.

The cricket correspondent of *The Observer* recently underlined the dangers of over-caution and stilted thinking by saying, "Mediocrity breeds defensive tactics in self-preservation: but they have become so habitual that they are pursued by captains even when they hold a full house." We do not say that Birmingham's librarians are mediocre, but it does seem that "defensive tactics in self-preservation" have become habitual with them.

We have something to be proud of in most of our libraries. Let us tell people about them and let us accept the inevitable corollary that some of these people will find things to criticise. All the better. If someone is sufficiently interested to criticise, he will often be sufficiently interested to listen to an explanation and to appreciate the good service he will get later on. Many a critic can be made into a friend, but irritation and ill-will can be the only result of mere moaning that anyone should dare to criticise our hallowed precincts..

Multitude of Nonentities

Another protest from the local group of the Reference and Special Libraries Section says that we have contravened the accepted standards of library journalism. We do not know exactly what these standards are but, looking at most of the other journals, we can only say that we are very proud to have departed from them.

The Times, referring on May 9th to the recent books by Ian Johnson and Jim Laker, said that they fall into a class "overcrowded with a multitude of nonentities." We suggest that this applies equally to our library journals. "The fault," said *The Times*, "is not altogether that of the writers. There are conventions in these things, and so even the mildest word of criticism of a player . . . is immediately qualified by the automatic assurance that we are, of course, the greatest of friends." How much more could legitimately be written and conveyed if only they "would break out of the deadening formula that governs their books." How much more could legitimately be written and conveyed if only our library journals would break out of the same deadening conformity.

Good Taste

We are accused of "poor taste" in printing criticism of Birmingham. This is another term which has been so prostituted that it has become synonymous with mediocrity. It has even extended to political journalism. About two years ago, the very respectable political columnist, Henry Fairlie, criticised, in the *Spectator*, a member of the Government by name and was assailed in the sacred name of good taste. His reply was that this was

not a question of good taste, but of rigid conformity with a standard that allowed no possible deviation from its pattern.

The fundamental issue, he said, is freedom, "and *freedom's main enemy to-day is not censorship by government, but the censorship imposed by an atmosphere of moderation and good taste which stifles—and is intended to stifle*" (*Spectator*, July 29, 1955).

We suggest that our critics are not really concerned with good taste, but with this stifling form of censorship. We suggest that their attitude is contrary to the highest standards of librarianship. If anyone owes an apology it is Birmingham—to your Editor.



Your Views

I am forced to spring, instantly and inwardly propelled, to the defence of library staffs. How much longer and how much more often are we to read these inane criticisms which in this particular instance is in extreme bad taste.

Of Henry Garnett I know nothing, nor do I wish to know if he is the type of man he has shown himself to be in the published letter to his daughter, Margaret Cook. He had only to walk to the counter of the Birmingham Reference Library as I have often done) and ask not even politely for an answer to his question. But because he is not immediately recognised for what he is ("am I to be treated like a commercial traveller") the assistants male and female are apish nincompoops, flat-chested, round-shouldered, untidy-haired, shapeless-featured, surly and quite distressing.

Let Mr. Garnett put himself for one day inside one of these egg-stained waistcoats and he will realise that librarians are forced to pander to a crassly stupid section of the public who are blind to the most eye-arresting notices, who when told to turn left will turn right and who expect a book to be renewed by simply giving a summary of the story. This and more we do, and do cheerfully and helpfully.

In my ten years of experience as a public librarian, I would say with all honesty that librarians are the most courteous, patient, intelligent, helpful and long-suffering of all servants of the public.

JEAN M. REID, *Gloucestershire County Library.*

Mr. Henry Garnett asks with what vision the unprivileged reader walks out of Birmingham Reference Library.

May this not depend on whether he walked *in* with sufficient humility to see his fellow men and women as they really are, and with sufficient imagination to envisage the possibility of the Hosts of Heaven being entirely Black? Given such humility and imagination, who shall say he's unprivileged?

SHEILA E. THACKER, *Edmonton Public Libraries.*

I am informed by the Editor of the *Assistant Librarian* that adverse comment is always good news value. I see elsewhere that his charm has recently been praised and that he is "getting away with murder" in the *Assistant Librarian* as a result.

A correspondent in a previous issue of this illustrious journal has also praised the present trends of the magazine, saying that he is sure that it is more stimulating and read more than ever before. The *Daily Mirror* enjoys one of the largest circulations to-day. But, surely, the nadir has been reached in the April issue.

I refuse to believe that a library with an established and great reputation like that of the City of Birmingham employs staff in its Reference Library who would simply ignore a person who made himself known or even looked as if he was there and required help. I refuse to believe the facts, as stated.

Is it that Mr. Garnett stood around looking for trouble and has represented every just rule and regulation of this department as a mountain, when really it is but a molehill? Is it because he refused to comply with the same practice adopted by all other users of this Department that he was ignored?

The malignant "humour" of this pipsqueak Kingsley Amis I find beneath contempt; obviously there is a possibility of collusion between his correspondent (his daughter) and himself to "write-up" a diatribe and "make 'em squirm," although such a pre-arrangement would never be admitted, doubtless. This letter is a mixture of sartorial snobbery and meretricious propaganda. The statements are offensive to the extreme to the staff of the Birmingham Reference Library; in fact, are they not in themselves grounds enough to constitute a written libel?

I strongly reprehend the Editor for allowing such tabloid Press "private-eye" rubbish in what used to be a journal with some standard of decency. The "Teddy Boys" of librarianship, the "l'avant-garde," will undoubtedly chortle, as long as their own libraries and local authorities are not at the receiving end. This is not "ginger." It is murderous misrepresentation masquerading as criticism.

Or are we now to have "informers" who will visit various libraries and then get some precocious relative to write in to our fair-minded Editor?

"CHUCK IT, ... Smith!"

E. A. WILLATS, *Islington Public Libraries.*

A Case of Public Relations

I hope that the rumours of a protest from the Birmingham Staff Guild, against the publishing in the *Assistant* of the extract from the Garnett letter, are unfounded.

If, however, there is an Association of Midland Writers, I confidently expect a strong protest from them and possibly a suggestion that there are better Birmingham walls to quote from.

The extract as printed illustrates very clearly the reaction of many readers to what they consider to be inefficient service. That the complaint in question is expressed in mental pus is only a difference of degree.

In most public libraries the service offered—in cramped buildings, without adequate staff or stock—falls short of the highest standards. These shortcomings are often attributed by "residents" to the fact that facilities are extended to "foreigners," particularly the most obviously-foreign—the coloured students.

It is not important that Birmingham Library is named (except as an example of the sound principle of naming names) for surely none of us would say "It couldn't happen here."

What is important is the question of public relations; the fact that every one of us is responsible for *good* public relations. To this end we must try to give the best possible service at all times and, what is equally essential, shirk no opportunity (or challenge, according to one's point of view) to explain to readers the true reasons for the deficiencies of our library services.

FRANK ATKINSON, *Hampstead Public Libraries.*

FROM THE BIRMINGHAM CHIEF LIBRARIAN : A Scurrilous Article ?

The April issue of *The Assistant Librarian* contained an article headed "THE PRIVILEGED READER: *an excerpt from a letter received by Margaret Cook, a pupil at Ealing School of Librarianship, from her father, Henry Garnett, a Midland writer.*" The letter purports to be a description of the assistants and service in the Birmingham Reference Library.

From records here I am satisfied that the letter was written by Mr. Garnett after a visit to the Reference Library on February 5th when he requested that certain information should be sent to him by post (he is

apparently a resident of Malvern). This was done on February 13th. It was therefore easy to identify the two assistants who spoke to him on February 5th, and who, with other members of my staff, are the subject of your scurrilous article.

I addressed a protest to Mr. Garnett, and denied most of the statements in his letter. He replied that he had no idea such an article was to be published, and that the private letter from which it was extracted did not pretend to present a factual account of the Reference Library, but gave a picture of the borrower's state of mind. He also informed me that during the years he has used the Birmingham Reference Library, he has never found the assistants other than helpful or courteous.

Mr. Garnett's letter to me makes it clear that you had no authority to publish the excerpt from his letter. I can only conclude that in taking the unusual step of publishing a private letter without the writer's consent you were animated by a desire to attack the Birmingham staff. In justice to them, I must ask for publication of the above facts in *The Assistant Librarian*. An apology on behalf of your Association has, I am told, been tendered to the Birmingham Staff Association.

I hope the Ealing School of Librarianship curriculum includes at least one lecture on the courtesies usually observed by recipients of private letters.

VICTOR WOODS, *City Librarian, Birmingham.*

Mr. Henry Garnett comments:

It seems to me that a great deal of fuss is being made over the trifle published under the heading of *The Privileged Reader*. I think, however, since the fuss is being made and since a number of regrettable comments have been addressed direct to me, it will be as well to make the position as clear as is possible.

The original was written in a personal letter from me to Miss Margaret Cook. It ought to be evident to any reader that my letter was not intended to represent the facts, but did in truth give a facetious picture of a borrower's attitude of mind. It is most certainly true that Miss Cook asked if she could use my name in any contribution to your magazine. To this I replied that I had no objection. I am convinced that during the conversation about my letter, Miss Cook thought that I was giving permission for her to quote its contents. I did not think that she intended to quote passages verbatim and, indeed, there are phrases that I should not have written for publication. There is no doubt whatever that Miss Cook acted in good faith. There seems to be a misunderstanding in various quarters and it is, of course, a fact that all library staffs have, without exception, been courteous and helpful to me.

I am told by Miss Margaret Cook's mother that a malevolent fairy at her birth cursed her with a sense of humour.

If it is any help, you make any use you wish of this letter.

From the Editor:

When the original article was received, we referred it back to Miss Cook on the grounds that the copyright belonged to her father, but she assured us that she had his permission for it to be printed. Although there may have been some misunderstanding between Miss Cook and her father, reasonable editorial precautions were taken before printing.

No apology has been given for printing the article. We are, of course, sorry that some Birmingham members are upset. We are always sorry to see a cricketer hurt, but that does not mean that we wish the game had never started. It would be impossible to run a live journal without hurting somebody's feelings occasionally.

Many will agree with Mr. Garnett that a great deal of fuss is being made about a minor matter. "It seems to me," says Miss Cook, in a letter, "that Birmingham are showing up very badly over this business." How right she is. Many people spoke to us with approval of the article, but none of them imagined that the Birmingham assistant really appeared "festooned in cobwebs" or with egg on his waistcoat. Of course, Mr. Woods, it gave a "picture of the borrower's state of mind" as anyone with an ounce of humour would have realised at the time. Is it not a good thing for us to know something of borrowers' attitudes? This uproar would be funny if it were not tragic that public relations should be handled with such a hammy fist.

The last sentence of Mr. Woods's letter seems to be as insulting to Ealing Library School as he alleges the original article was to Birmingham. We are sure, however, that the tutors and students there will have the good sense not to believe that he is "animated by a desire to attack" them.

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RICH AND RARE?

*Some thought on supply (of Librarians) and demand
(for higher salaries)*

by A. C. Jones

In spite of spirited opposition by librarians F. Fenton and R. E. Richards in the February issue of *Public Service*, it is likely that by the time this appears in print NALGO will be wedded to a policy of "sectional" pay claims based on supply and demand in individual professions. A move to reject this policy as "merely opportunist and expedient" was rejected by the N.E.C. in February, and if the policy is supported by the Nalgo Annual Conference at Bournemouth, local government librarians might well find themselves enduring a salary freeze while their fellow officers in the rarer professions are borne steadily up the A.P.T. scales by the law of supply and demand.

"My life will be sour grapes and ashes without you."

DAISY ASHFORD *The Young Visitors*.

Even without the intervention of NALGO, this sort of thing is already happening, as Mr. Richards has pointed out. Whatever the outcome of the NALGO conference we shall hear from time to time of wholesale regradings of architects, engineers and public health inspectors in order either to retain good men in their present departments or to lure others from less watchful authorities. Meanwhile a library post advertised on Grade APT I seldom fails to attract sufficient suitable applicants to form a respectable short-list. When it does, the solution is more often to reduce the qualifications required than to increase the salary offered—the need for qualified librarians is less easily demonstrated than the need for qualified engineers. Rarity value to us is a bunch of sour grapes—and we have a shrewd idea that they really *are* sour.

As a policy, reliance on the law of supply and demand is "opportunist and expedient." But that is only to say that it is realistic. Instead of sitting outside among the have-nots bewailing our abundance, we might better consider whether it would be possible to increase our own rarity value. (The Library Association may not be a trade union, but at least it has the power to control the number of Chartered Librarians.)

"Omne rarum carum, vilesceit quotidianum"

(All that is rare is dear, that which is everyday is cheap).

First, however, we must be sure that the grapes really are not sour—that is to say we must seek to prevent the lowering of standards which at present too often takes place when a post cannot be filled at the low (but not technically "inadequate") salary offered.

If this is to be done without preventing authorities from paying partly qualified assistants on APT scales if they wish (surely not a thing which we should wish to prevent *per se*), it would seem necessary to establish not only that certain posts should be graded in the APT Division, but also that they must be occupied by Chartered Librarians. There is increasing confidence in the actions of the L.A. in this field, and this might now permit effective pressure to be brought even on unqualified members; on the other hand, a thorough survey of establishments throughout the country, based on a job classification such as that recently recommended to the L.A. by the A.A.L., would make possible a considerable extension of L.A. influence on local authorities. Such action could never

be one hundred per cent. effective; but it could reduce the flow to a trickle.

"Omnia praeclara rara—"
(All things which excel are rare).

CICERO.

There remains the problem of our scarcity value—how to ensure that only a post advertised at a *more than adequate* salary will receive suitable applicants. The expediency of engineering such a situation cannot be denied. The ethics, and the practical value to librarianship rather than to individual librarians, must be matter for discussion.

There is no lack of precedent for such a course. It is common trade union practice with regard to indentured apprenticeships in industry, and the National Union of Teachers recently supported a similar policy with regard to the training of teachers for the "bulge."

The method by which a healthy scarcity of qualified librarians might be achieved, and the point at which it is desired, must be carefully considered. The present period of reorganization and examination revision is clearly an opportune time for such consideration. The number of Chartered Librarians must be related to the number of suitable posts, but it is surely self-evident that the number of newly qualified librarians each year should *not* be related to the number of *advertisements* during that year (though the contrary has been alleged). A Micawber-wise ratio—ten fewer librarians than posts rather than ten more—would seem to be desirable at certain levels.

"Voluptates commendat rarior usus—"
(Rarity enhances pleasures).

JUVENAL.

Rearrangement of the examinations is now in progress; some revaluation is implied, and this must have its effect. The Final examination in particular calls for and will doubtless receive careful scrutiny in this respect. What is needed, however, is some means of *regulating* the supply of qualified librarians according to demand. This could most simply be done by means of a competitive examination for a varying number of annual places. (The fact that this would presumably be over the dead bodies of some of our educators for librarianship need not necessarily be a deterrent). Or some qualification other than the examination could perhaps be varied—age limit or length of experience, for example.

If no action is taken then we can expect that the law of supply and demand *will* operate in our profession, but gradually and to the detriment of our service. As the rewards of librarianship fall behind those of other professions, our standard of recruitment will fall until it becomes necessary to improve our lot. The cycle will then repeat itself—only positive action will enable us to break out of this circle.

I am content in this article only to indicate possibilities. What is first needed is some discussion of principles, and this I hope will now be forthcoming.

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MOBILE LIBRARIES

Vehicular Service

In our May issue Mrs. Joan Firth made some acid comments on two mobile librarians, Miss Jo. Eldridge and R. M. Lyle, who had given details of the Leicestershire 'Van' Service. In the comments below Mrs. Firth is herself under fire.

From R. M. Lyle (who has now moved to Herefordshire County Library):-

I did not realise that it was possible for anyone of intelligence to gain so many misconceptions from a plain statement of facts—there must have been an outsize bee in the Easter bonnet of Joan Firth!

What utter nonsense to object to the word "van"—I must ask the garage foreman to wash down the "vehicular bookmobile" and watch his face! Old vans, new vans, borrowed vans, blue vans—yes, dear lady, vans they are whether U like it or not.

There was no suggestion of *bemoaning* the fact that rules could not be enforced. All mobile librarians bend, stretch and break them to help to accommodate the readers.

Joan Firth has been fortunate in always having the time to help her readers—she obviously has never issued between 200—250 books per hour, sheived returns and moved the van round the village. We all like to be able to give leisurely and charming assistance, but it is not always possible. Leicestershire librarians are well-known for their helpful and willing assistance to readers, as any of the latter would confirm. I do hope that Mrs. Firth's readers like being "led on" to better books—does it never occur to these well-meaning librarians that the relaxation provided by a book can be just as valuable as the education given by a "better" book?

Mrs. Firth is too coy to name her authority, but if the supply of mobile librarians exceeds the demand, obviously the standard set is considerably lower than elsewhere.

Having spent over six years as a mobile librarian, and recently returned to the work thankfully after a spell in a branch library, the most unfortunate of the impressions was that I regarded the work as a penance. I love it, and the country people are wonderful characters and friends. A grand job—for the right person.

From C. D. Needham, Kent County Library:-

My most lenient judgment of Mrs. Firth is that she misunderstood the nature of the original article which she sets out to criticise. It was written in answer to a request for factual and statistical information on running a mobile library. Unfortunately Mrs. Firth has read it emotionally: and with how nauseating a result. Her article reminded me of one of those cheap (I mean morally and intellectually, of course) American text books on ideal book selection which one is unfortunately forced to plough through now and again. Perhaps one or two phrases in the original article were, as Miss Eldridge herself admits, unhappy; but let us not be petty, it was distinctly useful and interesting.

Mrs. Firth complains of the defeatist tone of the original. I hadn't noticed it. On the contrary, apart from the fact that the writers *say* they enjoy the life, I felt that they described the routines of mobile librarianship with evident gusto. After all, there are routine tasks even in mobile

libraries, and although, in common with most librarians, I am always eager to find ways of lessening drudgery, I sometimes think that a good shot of routine is the only antidote to that disease of facile idealism from which Mrs. Firth seems to suffer so tragically.

And then that "van" business . . . Still, I am quite willing to admit that words do vary from county to county and perhaps the farmers in the West Riding have taken to using vehicular harvesters since I was last up there. Mrs. Firth's idea of "inhibition" is the sort of thing one would expect of someone just emerging from a finishing school for young ladies. It isn't worthy of an "open-air" librarian.

There is no justification whatever for Mrs. Firth's criticism that Mr. Lyle and Miss Eldridge "tackle the job as though they were delivering the groceries." They mention "assistance to readers" with an "of course" implying that they have faith that their readers will understand all that that means without further elaboration. But, oh dear, Mrs. Firth has to go and embarrass everybody by summing it up as: "Two for Mr. A. and the usual for Mr. B." Need Mrs. Firth tackle the job as though she were behind a bar?

Mrs. Firth's insistence on the abundance of drivers shows a lack of understanding of the system described by the Leicestershire librarians. So does her comment on staffing. Anybody who has worked with country people will agree that they need the best professional attention—but the whole paragraph is irrelevant as criticism, as are the last two paragraphs which, to borrow a phrase from Mrs. Firth, are "too horrible for comment."

Please, Mr. Editor, spare us such rubbish in the future. If this is what is in for those examinees who, following their tutors' advice, "read up professional literature," is it any wonder that so many give up? And who's going to want to peddle a crate round the countryside now, after reading that.

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We hear of a library committee which has ordered that the Encyclopaedia Britannica be removed from stock because of its undue American influence.

YOUR Letters

Reading the Record

Miss Eggleston destroys her own argument by needing to be "inveigled" into reading the *L.A. Record*. If it was interesting, no persuasion would be necessary and the question would not arise—surely she does not seriously claim that to read the *Record* prevents stagnation? Rather the opposite! It is a very sweeping condemnation to accuse all those who find the *Record* dull of having a narrow viewpoint—that must mean about 90 per cent. of the Association.

I hope Miss Eggleston noted the comments of Mr. Callender in the April *Assistant* (page 59) about assistants being "press ganged" into the L.A. It all comes to the same point—being made to pay for something one does not want and could well do without.

At the A.A.L. Conference, Mr. Clough was "amazed and surprised" to find people who thought the *Record* was doing a good job. So am I, Sir, so am I, —won't you join me in stagnation?

R. M. LYLE, *Herefordshire County Library*.

Most of the material contained in issues of the *Library Association Record* could be disseminated with greater economy by the use of different media, according to the type of contribution.

For example, the interesting and erudite articles by Prof. Irwin on the history of libraries should not appear in periodical form at all, but should be collated and published properly in book-form for the general public, as well as librarians, to read. Articles on special techniques, descriptions of various libraries, and so on, should similarly be collected, sifted out and published by the Library Association in text book form. Other matter, which it is not proposed to publish in this way, could be deposited in the library of the L.A., and in the libraries of the various library schools, a short duplicated list being sent to all libraries indicating the existence of this material. Articles of more general interest should surely be found in such papers as *The Times Literary Supplement* or the *Book-seller*. I have in mind such matter as Presidential Addresses, prize essays, and articles on Carnegie medal winners: things which seem to me of no great moment as far as the library profession is especially concerned, but which may find interested readers among the general public.

In this way, members of the L.A. will not have in their homes a voluminous collection of material concerned mostly with irrelevancies of the type described above; nor would we have to wade through piles of this stuff to find an article which is important for study purposes, as it would be published in book form along with other material on the same subject.

Really vital and topical material should, of course, be distributed to libraries: I suggest the admirable *Liaison* as a suitable vehicle for conveying really important information.

The money saved by adopting such economic measures should be put to the extremely urgent and long overdue matter of professional publicity, a topic about which I am sure most of your readers have much to say!

R. LLOYD, *Tottenham Public Libraries*.

Is It Worth While

Are librarians human? It must depend which librarians and how human you want them to be. After all no-one who is human *likes* work except now and again. Few librarians like work all the time. Some of the time, some of the work is worthy of a human being. Some of the work is creative, some of the time. It is the unpredictable element in Librarianship which leaves room for some hope. That element can be creative, and not secondhand if it assembles material which an inventor or poet or scientist could not have assembled for himself. Without you, the librarian, these people could not send out in the world their machine with wings that don't flap, their embryo, "The force that drives the green fuse in the waste land," their homogenized milk. You have helped to change the world: you can be said to have changed the world.

And was it worth while after all? Of course it was. Perhaps you can sit down in your backwater and write a novel about an inventor, a poet and a scientist. Without them you could not create them. The process can be reciprocal.

TONY SHEARMAN, *North-Western Polytechnic Library School.*

Yorkshire Archives

The Yorkshire Division of the A.A.L. held its inaugural meeting at Leeds on December 13th, 1906. This year we are to celebrate, if belatedly, our 50th Anniversary. We shall hold a special anniversary meeting, at which it is hoped many old members of the Division will be present, later in the year.

May I appeal to any members of the A.A.L. (Yorkshire Division) past and present, who have any photographs, leaflets, souvenirs, or mementos of meetings and outings organised by the Division, to lend them to us in order to create a display at the meeting. Contributions will be gratefully acknowledged and returned when the exhibition is over. Please turn out your bottom drawers and ransack your personal files, and if you can find time to append a note to the effect that "the callow youth, second from the left in the middle row is now Chief Librarian of . . ." we shall be most grateful. The address is Central Library, Albion Street, Hull.

WILLIAM R. FLINT, *Chairman, Yorkshire Division A.A.L.*

Who's Confusing Who ?

It is surely time that the running battle which Mr. W. Howard Phillips has been conducting in print for the past three years over the use of the Dewey Decimal Classification in the Registration examination should be brought to a close. It should also be recognised that it is an upheaval of his own making. At no time has there been any official suggestion that students are expected to produce for books set in the practical paper the same notation as that produced by B.N.B. for the same books.

There are, in fact, at least three reasons why they should (possibly) differ. (1) B.N.B. is a development of Dewey's scheme, based on Ranganathan's PMEST formula. (2) On the basis on (1) B.N.B. provides a verbal extension of the notation, following the symbol [1], where the notation itself is not co-extensive with the subject of the book. (3) B.N.B. has incorporated revisions and new places provided by the 15th edition of the Decimal classification.

Thus an examination student, using the 13th or 14th edition of Dewey's scheme can produce a different notation from that given in B.N.B. for the same book and yet be correct. No one except Mr. Phillips and those whom he has confused, has ever doubted that, least of all students properly so-called. Cannot the matter rest there?

V. T. H. PARRY, *Asst. Librarian, Colonial Office Library.*

The editor's justification is that Mr. Phillips is looking after the interests of classification students. Classification, at the level of the Registration examination should be a relatively simple matter. Not long ago an examiner agreed with us that a thorough understanding of Phillips' *Primer of Classification* and the introductions to the various schemes is sufficient to pass the theoretical examination. That is still true, but tutors bitten by the Ranganathan-B.N.B. bug are building this minor technique of classification into a monstrous gargoyle from which a flood of ridiculous jargon is threatening to overflow its murky channel and destroy the saner roads of librarianship.

The second Phillipic represents a strategic withdrawal. Now B.N.B. is "competent and useful," though its classification is a potential danger to students and unacceptable as standard practice—presumably Sheffield has too much invested in its "Index to the index" for the advantages of national cataloguing and classification to be considered sufficient reason for changing local practice—there will have to be a national library service first.

UN-BIRMINGHAM ACTIVITIES

Council Notes—16th May

On 16th May the standards and behaviour of the Press were being called into question in the House of Commons. In the Council Chamber at Chaucer House the debate took a similar turn. A small bomb called *The Privileged Reader* was exploded in the April *Assistant*, and the fall-out which descended on the Council seemed to indicate that in Birmingham's opinion at least the bomb was not a very "clean" one.

The Council heard the full story of attempts to achieve a settlement out of court, of apologies offered by the Honorary Secretary (not for publication of the letter, but for the offence given to the susceptibilities of the Birmingham staff), and of apologies rejected unless they were printed in bold type on page 1 of the *Assistant*. Grim details were related about incorrect facts, and it was ascertained that assistants in the British Museum of the Midlands wore neither egg on their waistcoats nor festoons of cobwebs about them when they emerged from the stacks. The West Midlands representatives told their tales of fury and ferment, and it seemed that the President's plea not to spend too much time on "this small item" would be ignored.

Mr. Tynemouth rose in an attempt to find a middle way, but could not resist putting the view that "the editor is not responsible for the views of his correspondents—and we are not responsible for the editor." Those who know Mr. Smith will inform you that he is not a man to miss his cue. He looked anything but repentant as he stood to inform us:

"I feel like Arthur Miller before the un-Birmingham activities committee. The heavens roared what many took to be approval, but the clapping thunder was greeted pessimistically by the Editor, who muttered, 'Even the gods dislike me.' I could not feel that Birmingham had taken their complaints so far."

"When in doubt, defer," is a good committee maxim. The Council accepted Mr. Tynemouth's advice that they should postpone further discussion until their next meeting in September. In the meantime space will be kept for Birmingham to take up the invitation to reply in the *Assistant*, the Midland representatives will take back the views and opinions expressed at Council, and the summer months will be given an opportunity to bring the whole affair to an amicable conclusion.

Jobs for the Worms

From the Miller's tale to a tale of three chiefships. The regular item on posts at inadequate salaries included news of two of them, Grimsby and Lindsey and Holland (County). Intending candidates had been asked in *The Times Literary Supplement* to first contact the S.M.C.C.L. No such action had been taken by the L.A. on this occasion, although they had signified their support of the S.M.C.C.L. in a circular addressed to all Branch and Section secretaries. Mr. Muris again warned the Council that there were some members who refused to accept the S.M.C.C.L. whip, and the Honorary Secretary was asked to try to persuade the L.A. that they should also advertise in the *T.L.S.* so that this loophole should not be left open for the worms who might wish to crawl through it.

The third Chiefship was at Hinckley. From candidates attending the interview the Honorary Secretary had received murky details, and all of them were confirmed by Mr. Flint, who had himself been a candidate. He gave his opinion that any candidate accepting the appointment under the prevailing conditions should be ashamed. "I am sure he has every

right to be," said the President. The matter is now in the hands of the L.A. Membership Officer, and the Honorary Secretary in another capacity promised that the full details would be published as soon as possible.

So heavy was the business of the Council on this occasion that there is space to report only a few unusual and non-recurring items from the committees. From the Publications Committee came the news that *Resources Discovered*, the second A.A.L. film, has won a third award in a national competition. It is now to be entered in the Festival of Films in the Service of Industry competition. The Council, Mr. Phillips apart, seemed generally pleased to hear from the Education Committee that 21 A.A.L. tutors had attended the National Conference of Tutors held at Chaucer House in May, but they nevertheless support the committee in rejecting two motions connected with the organisation of correspondence courses which had been forwarded by the conference.

A motion from the G.L.D. Committee has now worked its way through the Finance Committee and A.A.L. Council, and is to be forwarded to the L.A. Council, who are asked to regard members on National Service as "not gainfully employed" (like married women) for the purpose of subscriptions, thus entitling them to the special rate of 15s.

Parsimonious L. A. Council

The Finance Committee also reported an acknowledgement of the A.A.L.'s donation to the John Rylands Fund. In his letter to the Honorary Treasurer the Keeper of Printed Books at the John Rylands Library said:—

"It is most pleasing to us to know that our colleagues appreciate the difficulties under which the Library is labouring, and are so ready to come to our assistance in a practical manner." This gave Mr. Surridge an opportunity to comment on "the parsimonious attitude of the L.A. Council" towards the John Rylands Library Fund.

Municipal Libraries Section

Undoubtedly the most important report on this occasion was that of the Policy Committee. The Council had before it the proposals and questions on Branch and Section Reorganisation set out in the April *L.A. Record*. The views of all the divisional committees had been sought, and the Policy Committee had put in some hard and useful work the previous afternoon to come forward with a set of recommendations which, surprisingly perhaps, met with fairly swift approval by the Council. Briefly, the A.A.L. has come down in favour of a Municipal Libraries Section, but, as is now the fashion, *with strings*. Our stipulated strings are that the present branch structure shall be discontinued, that the formation of regional co-ordinating committees shall be encouraged, that the A.A.L. shall continue as the only section catering for assistants in all types of library, and that members shall be able to opt for *three* sections. We advocated the amalgamation of the proposed Municipal Section with the County Libraries Section, and thereby pleased Mr. Ferry, who "can't see any reason for the co-existence of county and municipal sections." Other suggestions were made, and these will emerge in due course.

We passed to consideration of the proposed L.A. syllabus revision, and quickly dismissed the G.L.D. view that wholesale revision was not necessary. The day was saved, as it has so often been for English cricket, by Yorkshire, who submitted a motion long enough to deserve a supplementary paper. This set out what Yorkshire considered should be the A.A.L.'s policy in this matter, and the Council went so far as to accept it with only the gentlest surgery—removing one paragraph only. It trans-

pired that the Yorkshire recommendations were substantially the same as those made by the L.A.'s own syllabus revision sub-committee. Some of the more suspicious saw the library schools as the link here, but as Mr. Thompson said, "collusion would, of course, never be approved." The Council now stands by a two-tier examination syllabus only, with Associateship awarded after the Final—or second—examination, and the Fellowship being a thing apart, awarded for a Thesis or some evidence of important or original work.

The next two items on the agenda were devoted to the Greater London Division. The first sought to congratulate the L.A., and the Membership Officer particularly, on "recent successes gained in negotiation concerning posts at inadequate salaries." The Council were unanimous in support, with the sole exception of Mr. Phillips, who called it "back-scratching," and was himself called "ungracious" by Mr. Atkinson for his pains.

The second item was the long-awaited report on welfare and working conditions in special libraries. The Greater London Division Committee had produced this for the Council after years of effort, but it was not greeted with unqualified approval. Mr. Bubb underlined the complexity of the problem by explaining with beautiful simplicity to his municipal colleagues that non-public libraries are about as similar as "non-public houses." The Council decided to look before it leaps, and the Honorary Secretary was asked to obtain opinions on the report from special librarians "of his acquaintance" before the next meeting.

The A.A.L. Conference next year is to take place at University Hall, Liverpool, during the week-end commencing 28th March. Mr. Davinson sought the permission of the Council to make an immediate booking, and having obtained it, said: "I made the booking last week." Here at least is one man who is certain of the attractions of Liverpool.

The general consensus of opinion in the usual evening meeting place after the close of the session was that this was the busiest and most con-

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structive Council meeting for years. It is to be hoped that the Brighton School of Librarianship, who were present *in toto*, found it instructive and enjoyable. Two final comments should perhaps be made. The first is to record the most notable début for some time. Mr. Hoyle, who was present at his first meeting as a substitute for an absent Liverpool representative, made an impression that left many hoping that he will soon be attending in a more regular capacity. The other side of the record is that, the President apart, no lady member present contributed a word to the discussion. Did I hear Mrs. Pankhurst turn in her grave?

ERIC MOON.

The West Midlands representatives ask that it should be made clear that they spoke at this meeting as members of the Birmingham Public Library Staff and not as Divisional Representatives as they had had no opportunity to consult their Divisional Committee.

What is a Primer?

An Open Letter to the A.A.L.

from R. C. Bengé, Senior Lecturer, The Library School,
North-Western Polytechnic

The A.A.L. has traditionally concerned itself with the needs of its youngest members. In recent years, however, the response to changed circumstances has been delayed and uncertain.

This comment is immediately provoked by the new edition of Mr. Hepworth's pioneer primer on *Assistance to Readers*. This is a genuine attempt to meet a new situation and makes no claims for permanence. I do not wish, therefore, to make a carping attack on this book as such, but rather to suggest that by its very nature it was bound to fail, since Mr. Hepworth is limited by certain assumptions which would seem to be still widely prevalent.

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In this field—as in others—we have had few good textbooks because there was nobody to write them. In the pre-war era there were valuable books on this subject, but they were not *textbooks*. Mr. Hepworth says that nowadays the subject “would scarcely be recognised by the McColvins, authors of *Library Stock and Assistance to Readers*.” This is natural enough since the subject as a proper field of *study* scarcely existed. The examinee was simply exhorted to examine carefully as many books as possible—the more the better. Robert's *Introduction to Reference Books*, which is limited to general reference material, is an adequate textbook; it is properly organised because it is based on a lecture course. In general I think it is fair to claim that textbooks should be produced only after teaching experience, because if this is lacking, the result may be needlessly confusing. A failure to appreciate this educational truism gives rise to the curious illusion that a practising librarian *by virtue of his experience* is capable of providing what is required. An annotated list of books is a necessity, but it is not a textbook; chapters which indicate to the student what he would know if he had the experience of the writer have a certain value, but it is a strictly limited one. Thus in Mr. Hepworth's primer this method is seen at its best in Chapter One, but at its most horrifying in the sections on general reference material and on the subject approach (Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13). Here the material is not *organised* and in consequence has little meaning to the student. So, for example, any lecturer as a result of his work will arrive at a simple arrangement of biographical sources: but in the primer these items are muddled up together so that the functional pattern is obscured. Similarly periodicals and the guides which list and analyse their contents lend themselves to systematic treatment: but in the primer the system is absent.

I mention these examples only to make the point clear. It is fundamentally a matter of order, and in so far as classification is used here it results in the alarming distinction between more and less difficult material

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—a distinction which is mainly subjective since it rests on the assumption that everybody works in small public libraries. Another pre-war assumption is that students will be studying in their spare time. Finally Mr. Hepworth refers to subject specialisation as “bold, visionary and impractical” forgetting that “the librarianship of to-morrow” which he mentions has been with us for some time; students in any event are not concerned with the past.

To sum up, Mr. Hepworth's primer is helpful and we should be grateful, but it would be unfortunate if students should conclude that the subject is as difficult as this. The purpose of this note is to protest firstly that this vital study is not so impossible after all, and secondly that the A.A.L. should readjust itself to current needs.

Can You Do Better?

An Open Letter to Mr. Benge

from P. Hepworth, City Librarian of Norwich, and author of the latest A.A.L. Primer.

If practising tutors think any or all of our existing text books wrongly conceived, why do they not themselves write better ones, as they have, of course, far more time for this purpose than practising librarians?

Library school tutors who have a vested interest in full-time Librarianship training will not serve their cause best by shutting their eyes to the fact that the great majority of students still cannot attend library school. My *Primer*, quite naturally, as an official A.A.L. publication, had mainly correspondence course students in mind, and though it did not assume that “everyone works in small public libraries” it had in mind the needs of the vast majority of students of all types who do not work in large general libraries.

I am particularly sorry that Mr. Benge should attack the new edition of my book as I consulted him after his criticism of the earlier edition, and definitely based the new edition on his own suggestions (Standing Committee on Education in Librarianship. *Notes for tutors. Assistance to Readers*. 1955). Before the book went to press, I satisfied myself that questions set in recent examinations could be answered from it if not adequately, at least much more satisfactorily than from the earlier edition.

As an honours graduate in history and a colleague of many correspondence course students, I am entitled to my own views as to whether the present examination is difficult or not, and I consider my own teaching experience at the Birmingham College of Commerce for some years compares in adequacy with the practical library experience of some full time tutors. Nor, having been on the staff of the Sheffield Public Libraries for some years, do I personally deserve the jibe about small libraries.

What is there “alarming” about a “distinction between more and less difficult materials”? Does not Mr. Benge consider the L.A. examiners' regular comments on the way the *Assistance to Readers'* paper (particularly section C) is tackled, to be adequate evidence of difficulty? And now that he himself has escaped from the National Joint Council to the more generous bosom of the Burnham Committee and “the bloody Library Association has made its examinations ten times more difficult” (Braine: *Room at the Top*, p. 120), does he really think that the present Registration examination is a fair *qualifying* examination for a normal salary (in local government) of £625 p.a. (see the *Times Literary Supplement* back page), or perhaps he thinks there should be no relationship between salaries and prospects, and examinations.

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AUGUST, 1957

Talking Points

The Net Book Agreement, so far as it affects libraries, should be abolished. It is a vicious restrictive practice, a supporter of inefficient booksellers, a bar to enterprise on the part of librarians, and a waster of public money on a grand scale. In order for it to continue in force, the booksellers have to justify the agreement before the Restrictive Trade Practices Court, and this would seem to be an appropriate time for the Library Association to give evidence that the Net Book Agreement, so far as public libraries are concerned, is not in the public interest.

Public libraries spend over 3 million pounds on books each year. We do not know what proportion of this is on new stock, but, if the figure is only two million pounds, then we suggest that about £20,000 a year is being wasted by the effects of the Net Book Agreement. If it were not for that, libraries would be able to strike their own bargains with booksellers and obtain a discount of 20 per cent. instead of 10 per cent. at present.

Efficient booksellers are willing to give a 20 per cent. discount and many of them, unofficially do. In one shop recently we found a consignment addressed to a library of books for which not only was the discount 20 per cent., but also the books had been accessioned, stamped and labelled! We know booksellers who not only are able to provide an efficient service on such terms, but are obviously prospering on it.

The usual reason advanced for the retention of the agreement is that it protects the small bookseller, but it is a striking fact that it is usually the small booksellers who offer better terms. They claim, in fact, that the agreement is merely a device which allows the big bookseller to maintain high profits. Why should not librarians be free to make the best terms they can with the booksellers? Are we so well off that we could not use the money we would save by getting a bigger discount?

With non-public libraries, this matter is also of great importance since many of them get no discount at all from the published price of their books. Many booksellers, in return for regular orders, would be willing to give a discount, but are prohibited from doing so by the Net Book Agreement.

Whether the retail price of books to the public in general should be controlled by a restrictive practice is a matter for the publishers, the booksellers, and the book-buying public, but this need have nothing to do with the libraries. It is up to the Library Association to take action.

Mr. O'Leary, true to his recent vehement denial of his decease, has produced at Dagenham *One Thousand Books for Boys and Girls* (Price 6d. or, by post, 1s.). The foreword has a note to parents worth quoting, "Children grow, their feet get larger and they eat more. This you can see. Their development *within* is not so easily measured. Part

of it is the awakening of the imagination. This selection of books has that in mind."

The First Professional Examination was never a good idea and it is good news that it is to be abolished when the new 2-stage syllabus comes into effect. But what of the meantime? Are students seriously to continue to study this nebulous syllabus and tutors to continue the impossible task of teaching it? The L.A. should make an immediate declaration that no more papers will be set and, pending the introduction of the new syllabus, should allow students to proceed direct to the Registration Examination. The F.P.E. has been of no use to them in the past, is of no use to them at present, and will be of no use in the future, so why waste everybody's time by continuing it?

If it is to be continued, we hope that tutors will bring a little more reason to their teaching of classification. Too many are continuing in the old Entrance Examination style to go through all the business of trees of Porphyry, characteristics, differences, and all the other abstract theory which is *definitely not required by the present syllabus*. A glance at the questions set so far will show that this is correct.

Often lacking in libraries is a good channel of communication from Chief Librarians and Heads of Departments to the junior staff. No-one tells them of the policies being pursued in the libraries and no-one tells them of the important books that are being added to stock. A praiseworthy attempt to overcome this is occurring in Manchester Public Libraries with a special staff news-sheet, *Information*. It primarily serves the need of the reference library staff, but must be extremely useful also in other departments and branches. The first section offers in each issue some information about some of the reference services (e.g. the special indexes maintained which may not be known to all staff), the second deals with important new acquisitions, and the third notes new items on librarianship. It is interesting that this last feature includes not only books, but also articles in periodicals not devoted exclusively to librarianship (e.g. the article *Keeping up to Date* by Dr. Urquhart in *Technology* for March, 1957).

We are proud to print in this issue the Presidential Address of Miss Willson. It is no adverse reflection on the others to say that this was a superb speech, shining with the honesty and sincerity which characterises all she does. Her references to the L.A. Council make us hope that she will agree to stand as a candidate in her own right for that body in this year's elections. She would certainly command your editor's vote.

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THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE A.A.L. OF

MISS E. J. WILLSON

If I am to speak of the thing which I regard as of first importance, my subject chooses itself. It is that we are one profession, whether we work in public libraries, university libraries or special libraries, whether we are one of a staff of hundreds or ourselves are the sole staff. There are many varieties of library, but those of us who work in them are librarians, or assistant librarians. We share a common core of knowledge and a common faith in the importance of the written word. We are one profession and we need to apply to ourselves in particular John Donne's, "no man is an island entire of itself, every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main." All librarians are, I suggest, pieces of the continent of librarianship, not islands, or empires, on their own.

We are, of course, only a small profession, some twelve thousand members which, if put end to end, each thousand represented by a dot or dealt with by any of those conjuring tricks of which statisticians are so fond, would make a most unimpressive appearance. We know that size is no measure of value, but to-day the dahlia must be as big as the sharwoman's mop, and the largest marrow in the show wins the prize (no one cares if it tastes like wood). This is the age of the big, of the record, of the superlative. Small voices, especially small wrangling voices, are apt to be ignored, and if librarianship as a profession is to be heard it must be able to speak clearly and with one voice.

With whose voice? The answer is that of the Council of the Library Association. For three years I was London Branch Councillor and now I have the honour to represent you on the Council and I have learnt enough of what is done to resent the easy laugh which anyone may raise at a professional meeting by saying something rude about the Library Association Council. I resent it because the L.A. Council is our Council and we elect it; if the wrong people sit on it, it is our fault for not nominating the right ones and using our votes to get them elected. As a member of the Council I don't claim it is perfect, but it is a good deal better than those who criticise it think. Its worst failure is a mania for secrecy—not only must members at large be kept in the dark, but if Council members can be kept unaware of what is going on in committees on which they do not sit, so much the better! Fortunately there are signs of a recovery from this disease; the rash of "confidential" on papers which are circulated becomes less and if the editors of *Liaison* sat in on every committee, we might hope for a complete recovery. If you think the Council is composed of the "old men of the profession," you are out-of-date. The overwhelming majority of members are elected and they come from all types of library.

Talking of a united profession makes me wish that we could have more loyalty from some of its members. Not so much loyalty as would cramp them in the proper expression of considered opinions, but just enough to make them hesitate before spilling into the columns of journals devoted to the interests of other professions unrepresentative, half-baked nonsense. If they must express themselves in print I am sure the editor of the *Assistant Librarian* will give them space, and space for those who would reply.

It occurs to me that some may find it strange to hear a President of the Association of Assistant Librarians speaking as I have of the Library Association Council. If this is so then it is a measure of how far we have to go before we can have one united profession.

Some may think that the voice of the profession should not be that of the Council it elects, but of the Annual General Meeting. If anyone here is innocent enough to think that, then he has never attended an Annual General Meeting and seen the mixture of childishness, parish pump politics and downright rudeness there displayed. Indeed if this is what we get when those "united in their interest in libraries" meet, let us have something else! As it is at the present time, the Annual General Meeting cannot express professional opinion, and I say frankly (this is a personal expression of opinion and not necessarily that of the A.A.L.) that **authority and institutional members should have no place in the running of our Association** and if we were not afraid that we might lose their help when we needed it, and reluctant to part with their subscriptions, we should long before now have amended our bye-laws with, I believe, the sympathetic understanding of the majority of authorities. It is not only the authority members, however, who make our Annual General Meetings unrepresentative, equally so, I hope, are those who make cheap personal remarks and stamp down unwelcome speakers.

THE DUST-BOWL PROFESSION

Sometimes the library profession seems to me to resemble one of those arid waste areas which selfish exploitation has made of once fertile lands in many parts of the world. (The "dust bowl" profession as a change from the "Cinderella.") The hard unyielding earth, the drifting sands, the cracks in the surface, the storms of dust, all seem familiar. We, too, have suffered from erosion, and to say that much of our professional activity is arid is to flatter it. We can take what comfort we may from the fact that it is not "selfish exploitation" which has brought us to our present state, but rather a preoccupation with small details and a lack of vision.

The vision with which we must begin is of a united profession, one which is a federation of interests not a dominating majority giving sops to minorities. I am a public librarian who has never worked—except as a user—in any other type of library, nor am I likely to, but it seems to me that many of the developments in our profession must come from the fields of special librarianship. The split between public and special libraries (to use the usual glib division) will become less as more specialists are added to the staffs of general libraries unless we in public libraries, who are at present in the majority, ignore the specialists' claims to equality.

As you know, the Library Association has had a Reorganization Committee sitting for some time, and in the April *Record* it made a preliminary move. We are to consider alternatives and I hope that the complexity of the task will not prevent us from making some necessary changes. Unlike the British constitution, the constitution of the Library Association is a written one and can be changed if we wish it. I look forward to an organization by interests with local divisions or groups, an organization which is able to cater for all interests (even those of municipal librarians) and which will find a place for some of those groups which now function independently. Why should state librarians, local archivists, music librarians, school librarians and the rest not find a

place? (Let me say again that these are my own views, not those of the A.A.L. Council). An organization by sections recognises a perfectly natural division of interests which exists, and the A.A.L. is a living example of the advantages of becoming a section of the Library Association.

There may be times when we, in the A.A.L., look back nostalgically to the past, to 1929, when we were independent. We had just over a thousand members, the Library Association had 1,272, including institutional members. We are not likely to forget—nor allow others to forget—that we gave up our independence for the good of the profession as a whole. Why this very room where we are meeting to-night might still be resounding to the neighing of horses instead of to your President if we had not enabled the Library Association to fulfil its pledge to the Carnegie Trust and so earn its grant! Will anyone deny the gain to us all which has resulted?

Looking back into the past, you know, the “Bliss ’twas in that dawn to be alive.” “There were giants in the earth in those days” is a privilege of the old, but we are a young profession and should look forward.

The first stage then of bringing the “dust bowl” to fertility is a reorganization of the structure of the Library Association to give all types of librarians an equal place. We in public libraries might remember that in the early days of the L.A. many of our leaders came from special libraries; indeed they were our founders. We all need to make some adjustments in viewpoint and learn more about each other. It is easy enough for special librarians (many of whom are public library trained) to have a mental picture of an average public library, but who can find a snug generalization to fit non-public libraries into their place? In this it may be they are fortunate. Dr. Hoskings says, “Averages conceal the truth, it is the variations that reveal it,” but special librarians could do more to enable us in public libraries to understand their problems. There is a lack of books on the subject and a tendency in some quarters to use strange words like “documentation,” and which, when you examine them, turn out to conceal old friends.

Firstly then, **I want a reorganized profession in which all can play their proper parts.** Perhaps I should add that I see no reason for any but the most minor alterations in the structure of the A.A.L. in such a reorganization. It would remain, as now, a training ground for the younger assistant. Those who have tried in the past to engulf, overwhelm, outlaw, ignore or otherwise dispose of the A.A.L. have not found it easy. Perhaps this is because so many of the leaders of the profession are trained in the A.A.L. and no man cares to be seen kicking down the ladder up which he climbed or denying to his successors advantages which he himself enjoyed.

A reorganized profession, however, is not an end but a means. Most of us who choose library work as a career do so because we love books. I know that this is an unfortunate thing to say, and one which is likely to damn any young candidate up for his first interview, but if we did not care for books, what else could we come for? It is hardly likely to be the salaries or the prospects and young people do not usually choose a career because it is respectable and there is a pension after forty years. I do not think that young people are likely to be attracted by the social functions of a public library if, indeed, they know they exist. I am well aware, of course, that many people who make satisfactory librarians drift into the profession for no particular reason and that many others who are

with us are the misfits and rejects of other professions. I repeat that I believe that the majority of us come into librarianship because we want to work among books. After a while with the daily "getting and spending," we tend to lose sight of the importance of books and forget that not only did they have the power to choose our life's work for us, but they have enormous influence on the lives of those who use our services. Library work is made up of thousands of unique transactions of which we rarely see the result. Only occasionally do we recall Karl Marx reading in the British Museum or read in the newspaper that "the defendant said he learnt how to distil whisky from a book he borrowed from his public library" and realise that books play an active part in the lives of many people. We cannot measure the value of the work we do. Issue statistics do not help us much because one issue plus one issue does not really make two, any more than one elephant and one piece of string make two of anything worth counting as such. We public librarians are not, of course, so immune from the spirit of the age as to be able to ignore record issues, especially when they are something easily understood

If we stop to think about it we know that the work we do is of great value to the individual and to the community. Libraries alone stand for freedom of choice in a world blinded and deafened by television, films and radio, where every hoarding and newspaper pounds its message into us. The difficulty is that all that can be said on the importance of books and libraries tends to sound pretentious or slip off the tongue in platitudes and out of the mind as easily. I am no Milton able to mint something fresh for you, but I have been looking at some of those advertisements and offer you "*Books in, ignorance out,*" "*Libraries are good for you,*" "*Books please,*" "*If you want to get ahead get a book,*" "*Books add brightness,*" *There is no substitute for books.*" Now that last one says something we sometimes seem in danger of forgetting. A library is not made by punched cards or photo-chargers, wall-paper

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on the walls or elegant gadgets: there is no substitute for books. In saying this I have not forgotten the existence of micro-texts, of tape recordings, the Bush Rapid Selector and the rest, but you know a tape recording of Shakespeare reading his own plays would be a most unsatisfactory substitute for the written text; we should probably dislike his accent. But when we take up a volume of the plays we can read them in our own way, at our own pace, and get out of them as much as we are prepared to put in; after seeing a good production in the theatre, the first thing we do is turn back to the written text. The vogue for "the book of the film" is an expression of the same need. The written word possesses a very powerful magic not shared by audio-visual aids.

There is no substitute for books, and it is hardly necessary to remind you that a collection of books needs to be organized in libraries to be truly effective.

I think it is time we did a little more tub-thumping about the importance of our work. This is no time for us to be modest or we shall find that people conclude that (as was said of a certain statesman) it is because we have "so much to be modest about." This is the time for us, as one united profession, to shout out loud what books organized in libraries can do and what the national library service means. We dare not wait until all public libraries are worth shouting about because if we do we shall all be dead and buried before anything is achieved. We ought to make the required standards of provision clear and say what, given that provision, libraries can do.

We spend more than £500 million a year on formal education and the Minister tells us this is not enough. On public libraries we spend £15 million. I do not think anyone knows the total expenditure on all kinds of library, but if we say £30 million, how inadequate this is against £500 million! Yet libraries of all kinds are available to every one, according to his needs, from the time he can read to the day of his death and the school which does not teach its pupils how to read and make use of books has failed in one of its main tasks. There is no public library in the country which is adequate financed; from the greatest of them all, the British Museum, which must close at 5 p.m. because, it seems, we cannot afford to keep it open longer, to Steeple Claydon, one of the smallest places with an independent library service, which spends £12 a year on books. Many special libraries, in particular those of societies and institutions are in no better case. One special library of which I am a user, which possesses a unique collection on its subject, is so inadequately housed that if it had three users at once it would be overfull. Its librarian is not on the register of the Library Association. I have heard, too, of libraries in industrial firms ill-equipped and with ill-paid, unqualified staff. We must convince those who pay for our libraries that the most expensive ones are those run on the cheap.

We are in a difficulty. We want more money so we can give a better library service, but how can we show what a good library is without sufficient money? We are bound up by this seemingly endless chain of poor libraries, lack of appreciation of what a good library can do, inadequate public support, poor librarians and so on. How can we break out of it? We have some hope in that many libraries do give a better service than the public support of them would seem to deserve, and this provides us with a part of the answer. It is up to us to prove what we can do with the resources we are given. We can start at the beginning

with the assistant at the lending or reference counter. If that assistant lolls on the counter reading a periodical, if the arrival of a reader "interrupts" his conversation with a colleague, if he is inattentive, slovenly or rude, then support for the library is lost. It has been said that the librarian should be host in his library, it is also as well for him to remember that his guests are paying guests. If the atmosphere of the library is alert and friendly, if not only is good care taken of the books and publicly owned equipment in it, but that care is seen to be taken, then the library makes friends all the time. In itself this is not enough to gain the extra public support we need, but without it the task of the Chief Librarian and his Heads of Departments becomes impossible. Every Councillor prefers to believe what he has seen with his own eyes, or what his wife's cousin said she saw, rather than to take the word of the officer in charge who has an axe to grind.

A PROPAGANDA FUND

Obviously this improvement in public relations is a slow process and needs to be speeded up. I do not think we can look for immediate help from outside, from governments, local or national, or from public trusts. We must do the job ourselves, as a profession, as well as an individuals in our libraries. The A.A.L. has made some attempts with its two films and a pamphlet on public relations, and it is now to produce film strips. More resources are required to do a professional job on public relations. That is why I began to talk of you not about the need to show what libraries can, and should do, but about welding our profession truly into one and supporting the body we elect to represent us. We cannot afford to waste our resources and our time bickering with each other. The Library Association must take an active part in propaganda for libraries. Let it test the feeling of the profession by starting a fund to pay for propaganda; I'll gladly contribute to it and so will the majority if it will lead to a serious consideration of the pressing need to make the case for libraries heard.

To sum up for the benefit of anyone who has dozed off. **I want a reorganized profession which can speak for us all through its elected council; I want us to be unashamed of the importance of our work, and I want us actively to carry on propaganda for libraries so that everyone shall be aware of what they stand for, of what they have to offer and their value to the individual and the community in terms of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."**

* * * *

A.A.L. CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

REVISION COURSES, SEPTEMBER—DECEMBER, 1957

A limited number of *Registration* and *Final* courses will be available to run from September to December. These short period courses are reserved exclusively for those students who have already sat the examination in the subjects required.

The closing date for application is *25th August*, but forms for Final revision courses will be accepted up to one week after the summer examinations results. After this date no application will be considered.

FULL LENGTH COURSES.

Applications for F.P.E., Registration, and Final courses beginning November, 1957, must be completed and returned by *30th September*. Full particulars of the courses offered are given in the current edition of the *Students' Handbook* (L.A. 4s. post free).

FORMS, FEES AND ENQUIRIES.

Forms may be obtained from the A.A.L. Hon. Education and Sales Officer, Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A., 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21, who will be pleased to answer any enquiries concerning the courses. Stamped addressed envelopes for replies would be appreciated. The fee for each course is £2 10s. plus 10s. extra to students in Africa, America, Asia and Australia.

Parsifal of the Pulps

By D. E. Gerard, Deputy Librarian, Nottingham.

Raymond Chandler, it is said, is to start writing again, something like three years after the appearance of his last novel. The news will delight those of us who have caught the tang of his refreshing cynicism and the astringent flavour of his prose; for no one need lower his voice in a crowded room to confess a liking for Chandler. I have been moved to try a little practical vivisection on this author in the hope that some of the still untutored might perceive the pleasures that await them in the cold blue light of his world of calculated fantasy.

A modest start would best be made in the pages of the collection of his earliest contributions to the pulp magazines, his primary output, recently published together with a long analytical essay entitled *The Simple Art of Murder*, which gives the book its title. The essay dominates the book and demonstrates ruthlessly the architectural falsity of most current detective fiction, crisply outlining his own operational modes. These short stories are embryonic Chandler, the crudities yet to be softened into the refinements of the novels still in the future; this is Chandler still on the way up, still in the shadow of Dashiell Hammett, whose mantle, one writer said, fell upon him and was dyed a deeper shade of crimson. *The Simple Art of Murder* is his literary testament, and in writing it he registers his condemnation of the conventional pattern of the detective story: "There is nothing new about such stories and nothing old; they have learned nothing and forgotten nothing. The story you will find any week in the big, shiny magazines, paying due deference to virginal love and the right brand of luxury goods." The essay tells us that Chandler rejects the footprint-in-the-shrubbery school, demolishes its artifice and pretensions, and has little time for the lath and paper country house where the murderer kills for no other reason than to provide a corpse. He reduces to its unmeaning absurdity the average Agatha Christie fairy tale, the Ellery Queen pantomimes, the Sunday puzzles of John Rhode, takes as his specimen for analysis A. A. Milne's *Red House Mystery*, and shows why it is a mere house of cards. His main thesis is that murder takes place for a number of squalid reasons, and some environments are more likely to produce murderers and motives than others. It is with these neurotics and decadents, created and conditioned by the pressures of life in Gaudiland (any modern American city) that this author deals, remorselessly and penetratingly. "Murder," he argues, "is a frustration of the individual and hence a frustration of the race, and has in fact a good deal of sociological implication."

Chandler's backdrop, described with such loving, minute fidelity, that it sounds like an estate agent's brochure, is the Byzantine chateau on Sunset Boulevard, the neon-flushed street at night, and the muted excitement of the bars that minister to the lusts of the well-nourished citizens. For Chandler, the matrix of murder is the womb wherein the seven deadly sins develop and flourish. His universe is made out of this mould, in the image of greed, fear and debased sex, and is peopled with characters appropriate to it, the denizens of the asphalt jungle, engaging in activities this side frenzy. The material which keeps Americans awake over their breakfast paper is his fodder, and it comes straight from the heart of self-regarding real life. All he needed to do was to give it shape and formulate it as a story. The peculiar achievement of his art

has been his skilled transformation of the conventional blood-and-guts thriller into something approaching a social tract, cleverly retaining the pace of the former and the impact of the latter. This he has done by using a device perfected by Dashiell Hammett—the device of the perpetual hero—in this case a Parsifal whose chief weapon is courage and a certain old-fashioned regard for truth. His name is Philip Marlowe and he exists by virtue of a licence granted by the Police Department to operate as a private detective. Despite an unflagging addiction to whisky, he is in good shape, expert in the tools of his trade and possessed of an unending curiosity and a lethal poise. “He must be,” says Chandler, “a complete man, a common man, and yet an unusual man. He must be, to use a weathered phrase, a man of honour by instinct, by inevitability, without thought of it. I do not care much about his private life: he is neither eunuch nor satyr. He is a relatively poor man; he has a sense of character or he would not know his job. He talks as a man of his era talks, that is with wit, a lively sense of the grotesque, a disgust for sham, and a contempt for pettiness. He has a range of awareness that startles you, but it belongs to him by right. If there were enough like him in the world, it would be a safe place to live in, yet not too dull.”

Through a world sweet with the breath of corruption, then, Philip Marlowe moves like a cool stream of air, a not-so-young knight (he ages book by book and has now reached 38) in search of a commonplace grail, unprompted by sanctity, but sustained by his regard for impartial truth. He is the fulcrum of the action, the very focus of energy. At other times he has been called Beowulf, Sir Gawain, and more recently, Shane. His morality is just as equivocal as that of the last two, but his obsession with fact is unassailable. For his adventuring, Marlowe earns 25 dollars a day and expenses, though the author is careful to tie his income to the cost of living and his latest charges are 40 dollars a day. He is quite prepared to accept a love-token of \$1000 as well, if offered; and he is equally liable to return all his earned money if he is dissatisfied with his methods of solution. In his wry dialogue is summarised a whole way of thinking and feeling, one which belongs to the intelligent American of varied experience, no particular message to deliver, yet obstinate for the answer that yields him, in this case, physical pain, social contempt, and only occasionally a hard-headed, tender-fleshed succulent to share his bed. Marlowe survives because of his self-charging vitality, his lack of illusions, his second thoughts, his refusal to draw any moral, and the fact that he is not easily deflected from the immediacies of the problem between him and his next whisky sour. To the satanic finesse of the city politician, the obscene degradation of the drug addict, or the single-minded ambition of the screen actress, who constitute his intimates and enemies, he opposes a brutal honesty and a certain cultivation (“I can speak reasonably grammatical English when required”). Marlowe is human, makes mistakes, retracts, revises, loses his self-confidence, but never his objectives. His code suffers from the blows of outside agencies, but he is stubbornly proof against corruption. His shabby office is the cave of the Sybil. In the threadbare chair a whole tribe of clients have leaned back, tensed forward, sprawled, drawled and hissed their stories at him. From the other side of his (quite empty) desk he has in turn eyed them, weighed them, classified them and accepted them—at his own valuation. The empty desk symptomises the essential simplicity of Marlowe: his business efficiency is below par, his organisation irreducibly single. For equipment he needs only two items, brains—externalised in a chess set

he keeps, and brawn, assisted by a modest armoury. It is from the office that he begins his journeys in search of a distant solution at the far end of a maze of lies, animal fear, and menace. Whisky bottle and chess set would make admirable emblems on his scutcheon, and the novel *The High Window* concluded with a nice blending of the two when Marlowe raises his whisky glass to his reflection in the mirror after playing over fifty moves from a game of Capablanca's "beautiful, cool, remorseless chess," the kill made, his objective reached. His only recorded self-praise makes the last line of the book—"You and Capablanca," I said.

Such is the central creation of Raymond Chandler. To the new arrival in Bay City the world of Philip Marlowe will be a revelation, though so great has been the force of Chandler's influence during the past 17 years that it will not be as strange as it might have been. The new-comer will meet figures from a world of apparent dream, but let him be disillusioned of that immediately. In cold fact these men and women form the structure of too many cities in the world to-day, especially American cities. Here you will meet Moses Maglashlen, corrupt cop and with every reason to seek corruption; Mavis Weld, an ambiguous woman who typifies the ruthlessness of the story behind Hollywood success; Sherry Ballou, another aspect of gilded decadence; Moose Malloy, one of the race of grafters and hoods; Lash Canino, who symbolises cruelty; plus a chorus of bit players, all highly photo-genic. It is not a fragrant world, but has the vitality of the world we live in, and a writer with toughness of mind can make interesting and significant patterns out of it. And this is exactly what Chandler does, to perfection.

To finish, it might be pertinent to add that the diffuseness of the plots need never obscure the felicities of their expression. Enjoy the whole, savour the dish; the list of Chandler's works is not long, and all of it is essential reading. You will undoubtedly be left with a sense of dissatisfaction, wondering what the next work will be, vaguely desiring something more substantial. But these tracts for the times neither condone nor condemn; their interest is in their texture and their fluent wisdom, smooth as the bar counter on which it was generated. What more do we want? Let Chandler have the last word: "But all this is for me not quite enough. It is not funny that a man should be killed, but it is funny that his death should be the coin of what we call civilisation. All this is still not quite enough. In everything that can be called art there is a quality of redemption; it may be pure tragedy, it may be the raucous laughter of the strong man. But down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid. The detective in this kind of story must be such a man. He is a hero. He is everything." And that is the crux of the matter. In the modish suit and the athletic figure of Philip Marlowe is summarised everything of significance that Raymond Chandler has ever had to communicate, or is ever likely to. Why ask for anything more?

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THE SUBJECT DEPARTMENT AND THE ASSISTANT

by Miss E. K. Wilson, Liverpool Public Libraries

Some may be expecting me to approach this aspect of librarianship in a controversial manner. Such, however, is not my intention. I wish to show how the large city library with several subject departments is organised to cope with the miscellaneous material which comes its way. I am not able to tell you of any special training which will equip the assistant for entry to the subject department, for as yet recruitment to the staff of the subject department is from the general pool of assistants in the library. It is extremely useful, however, if the assistant, as part of his training has spent some time in the Reference Library.

A decision must be reached as to what qualifications and experience are desired. Professional knowledge acquired by a study of library subjects gives one mastery of the technique of the job; subject knowledge, whether accompanied by professional qualification or not, enables one to evaluate the materials one deals with and put them to work to the best advantage. Both have their value. Each one of us gives back to his work much of what he has been taught, and each assistant has a different concept of the duties involved. An assistant without knowledge of the best bibliographies in his subject field could not deal adequately with the book selection in the department. If we are to improve our service to readers, each class of books in our larger libraries must be looked after by a specialist in its bibliography. Similarly an assistant without practical experience in cataloguing and classification could not be expected to classify and catalogue in the subject department. It is desirable that the subject department should function as a unit. The staff, whether subject specialists or librarians, can carry out an efficient service most satisfactorily if responsible for the complete routine of book buying, cataloguing and classification. They are concerned with only a limited field and can adhere to a uniform pattern in applying class marks and allotting subject entries.

When we think of the subject department we must not think of it only as a library of books. Some subject departments contain such miscellaneous items as manuscripts, pamphlets, annual reports, maps and plans, prints and other pictorial material, newspaper cuttings, lantern slides, negatives, microfilms, broadsides and playbills.

Pamphlets should be fully classified and catalogued as individual items. They stand on the shelves in the classification sequence with books on the same, or closely allied subjects. Annual reports of societies and minutes of Council and Committee meetings are best kept loose in individual boxes designed to stand on the shelves in the classification sequence. The reports of societies can be kept in this way until there is a sufficient number for binding into a volume, and Council and Committee minutes can be retained until an annual volume is forthcoming.

Maps can be treated in several ways. At Cambridge University Library maps are stored flat in shallow steel trays about one inch deep, which slide into high steel cupboards. The doors swing open and are fitted with runners which hold the heavy trays as they are pulled out. The plan file made by the Art Metal Construction Company consists of a large steel cabinet, which has inside fifteen main pockets into each of which it is possible to place four heavy manilla folders. Each pocket is compressed by nine springs and moves backwards and forwards on ball

bearings. Early maps and maps of particular value may receive special treatment, each being provided with a portfolio.

The Print and Illustrations collection are common to many subject departments. The term print collection is a comprehensive one which covers several forms of pictorial representation. It includes pencil drawings, water colours, aquatints, mezzotints, lithographs, and engravings, among other forms. Prints are protected by cut mounts, hinged to a backing cardboard on which the print itself is hinged and not laid down. The reverse side of the mount should bear the name of the artist and engraver, the subject of the study, the date of the representation and the class and accession numbers. To avoid unnecessary handling of prints, photographic copies should be made of the more important original pencil drawings and water colours. Prints are most conveniently divided into sizes decided upon as being the most suitable, such as 12in. by 9in., 15in. by 12in., and so on. Such size groups depend on the number and variety of prints.

The building up of the Illustrations Collection need not be a costly enterprise, and a large and representative collection can be established for little more than the time involved and the cost of mounting the material. The perusal of illustrated periodicals, old books, advertising matter, and printed material of all kinds must be systematically undertaken and all suitable material extracted. The durability of individual illustrations, which are available for borrowing and may be subjected to a considerable amount of wear and tear, will depend on the material used for mounts. A high quality linen-faced manilla is most suitable. Stout portfolios, capable of holding two dozen mounted illustrations, should be provided for protecting illustrations on loan. A reference illustrations collection should be small and should be restricted to those illustrations which are large, and to expensive reproductions. The provision of different sizes of portfolios to accommodate material of varying sizes should be considered as well as the practicability of using larger vertical files for the smaller sizes. I would recommend a classified sequence with a separate index. In no subject department is the illustrations collection more valuable and indispensable than the Fine Art Library. Attention should be directed to the collection of good reproductions of works of art and illustrations of objects of art.

In the Local History Department, as in other subject departments, but to a greater extent, the newspaper cuttings collection supplements the information found in books. Items of local interest should be taken from the local papers and the leading national papers daily. Such a collection should include not only topographical and biographical cuttings, but also cuttings on such subjects as housing, education and municipal affairs. Every important aspect of life in the community should be represented. The simplest method of mounting cuttings is to paste each on a sheet 12in. by 9in. with a $\frac{1}{2}$ in. guard. The subject of the cutting may be written on the $\frac{1}{2}$ in. guard or on the top right hand corner of the sheet along with the class mark. When another cutting appears on the same subject it can be affixed to the first sheet. Individual cuttings may be arranged in classified order in a series of boxes. When sufficient cuttings appear on a particular subject they may be bound together into a volume and an index prepared to the contents of the volume. This volume may also include plans and photographs and be treated as an individual book.

In the Commercial Library many librarians maintain a clippings file by means of which the librarian can produce for a reader a folder of current information collected from many sources. In the *Times* and its

supplements appears a mass of complementary material renowned for its accuracy. When a *Times* Index appears the *Times* itself supersedes the file. It should be classed under the narrowest subject heading if the *Times* is the greatest service.

Lantern slides come next for consideration. Slides may be obtained in the usual size of approximately 3in., but a size now being adopted is 35mm. Consideration will have to be given to keeping them in one or two size sequences. They may be stored in specially designed drawers the width of the normal lantern slide box, or stored in a uniform set of the boxes themselves. It is more convenient if the boxes do not have divisions because the slides can then be moved or arranged within a box without undue difficulty. Each slide should be placed in a manilla folder the size of the slides, with a projecting tab. This tab projects about one quarter of an inch above and behind the slide. Inside the tiny folder is typed a description of the slide and on the projecting edge the class mark and the accession number. The manilla folder serves not only as a protection of the slide, but also the same purpose as a book card.

Negatives of photographs in the collection and negatives which may have been acquired separately may be dealt with in a similar fashion. These are in sizes, usually half plate, 6½in. by 4½in., and whole plate, 8½in. by 6½in. They may be stored in vertical folders also, or in transparent envelopes which bear at the top the class number, the accession number and the description. Micro-films may be on reels or strips. Micro prints are best kept in envelopes in a special file. They may be stored with advantage in metal containers in a cabinet in class sequence. Cinema films may be preserved in a series of sealed tin boxes commercially made for them, and stored in a fire proof vault.

Theatre programmes may be bound in volumes if sets are complete. Entries for theatre programmes and playbills should be under the name of the institution in the main catalogue. A calendar of broadsides is necessary. Entry under the subject and title would be the only entry in

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most cases. Entry should be under the name of the author when known. It is important that the name of the printer or bookseller should be given, and the date whenever possible.

It is assumed that the collection will have copies of all books in the library service on the subject, but it does not preclude copies being held by the branch libraries. It is important that when only one lending copy is held it should be in the subject department. Lending copies stand side by side on the shelves with reference copies. They may be distinguished by a different label and a distinguishing mark may be added to the class mark of reference copies.

It is desirable and essential that the classification scheme in use in the general libraries should be used in the subject department. Mr. Lamb in his *Technical and Commercial Libraries* writes "from this point of view a general scheme such as Dewey is adequate. There will of course be a few subjects, usually connected with the basic trade of the town in which closer classification is desirable. It is quite possible to apply a local expansion to them without creating a notation which may run to an absurd length." Again, to quote Dr. Savage, "the trained librarian has been taught to apply it in general libraries. He may however be called upon to prepare schedules for a special library, or to extend a published scheme, and most assuredly he will be compelled to apply a far greater number of sub-divisions, than the general practitioner."

This, though without doubt the best procedure, presents problems in the subject department. In adopting the general scheme we come across several inconsistencies. For instance in the Decimal Classification, we have divisions for dramatic and theatre, church and sacred music and so on. Several of each group are either orchestral, vocal or instrumental. In the Universal Decimal Classification preference is given to alphabetical arrangements by composers. It would appear to be the most logical because we ought to group music by the most important thing in it, namely the composer. The same criticism applies to the classification of the Fine Arts. Surely it is important to have the works by or on an artist together, instead of under architecture, sculpture, drawing and painting, whatever mediums have been used.

All the foregoing deal with public service. There is one subject department which should be included in every large library, namely, a staff library. It should be a separate room, cared for by the Reference Library staff, but at the same time a room where reference and lending copies of textbooks and more advanced works on librarianship stand on the shelves in classified order, where long runs of bound library periodicals are available for consultation, and current copies are on the shelves beside them, where analytical entries appear in the catalogue in this room, and where comfortable tables and chairs encourage the staff to sit and read. I should like to see also a system of staff training, whereby those entrants who have been in the profession approximately six months, would be given an opportunity of going as a class to the subject departments in turn, to be given a talk by the librarian in charge, to be told how to use the special catalogues and indexes, and to be set some interesting but manageable queries which would add interest to their visit.

From a speech given at the A.G.M. of the Liverpool and District Division of the A.A.L.

* * * *

PRIMER OF ASSISTANCE TO READERS (2nd ed. 1956, 8s. to members).

An errata list for this book is now ready and will be issued with copies bought in future. Those who already have the Primer may obtain an errata list by sending a stamped addressed envelope to the Honorary Education and Sales Officer (J. S. Davey, F.L.A.), 49, Halstead Gardens London, N.21.

In order to allow for the Editor's holiday, this issue was prepared earlier than usual and correspondence has had to be held over to next month.

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"A NICE LITTLE WHIRLWIND"

The 1957 Annual General Meeting of the A.A.L.

The battle between Education and Finance which has been a frequent topic in recent issues of Council Notes, was carried into the Annual General Meeting at Chaucer House on Wednesday, 15th May. Messrs. Howard Phillips and Peter Pocklington were carrying what they interpreted as the Education flag, and were anxious to gain recruits from the 110 members present for a cause which, if the truth be told, was never very clear to many members in the hall.

The first of Mr. Phillips's many short trips from his seat to his feet came towards the end of the Annual Report. The statement therein that the A.A.L. pioneer film *Index to Progress* had not dated, he called "a damnable lie." It is to be regretted that such language should be recorded in these columns, but Mr. Surridge interpreted something in Mr. Phillips' speech as a motion, seconded it, and found enough people energetic enough at this stage to put their hands in the air. The net result is that the Council is asked to re-examine its films' policy.

Encouraged by this minor success, Mr. Phillips went so far as to call the next battle on financial ground, somewhere he has never been known to win. As Mr. Davinson later in the meeting had cause to say: "I have only been to two Council meetings. On each occasion Mr. Phillips has disclaimed all financial knowledge. I have previously take this to be false modesty, but now find it to be quite true." Replies to Mr. Phillips' question about the number of publications on the stocks at December last were given by the Honorary Treasurer and Mr. Godfrey Thompson, the latter in his capacity as "chief scrooge," or Chairman of the Finance Committee.

With democratic firmness, Mr. Tynemouth managed to quell further discussion and have the Annual Report and Accounts approved and adopted. It seemed clear that he wished to pass on to his last duty from the Chair, that of handing over to his successor as President. He introduced Miss Willson as "only our third lady President," and pointed out that one of her predecessors, Miss E. M. Exley, now Borough Librarian of St. Marylebone, was present at the meeting.

The President's first duty at the Annual General Meeting is the not particularly arduous one of calling for nominations for Hon. Auditors for the current year. These came as readily as ever, Messrs. J. N. Harris and J. H. Jones moving that last year's auditors, Messrs. A. E. Brown and W. H. Mabey, be re-elected. Nobody dissented.

We came then, as we had to, to the Pocklington-Phillips' motion, which reminded the Council that education was one of its chief objects, and that education should be subsidised, if necessary, from general funds. Mr. Pocklington opened rather in the manner of Mark Antony with "Madame President, Ladies, Gentlemen and Friends." One wondered about the sex of the latter category. He reminded us of the elish sprite which had prompted him to conduct scientific experiments upon the window-sill of the Council Chamber at a previous A.G.M., and then tried to mislead all and sundry by informing us that the subject under discussion did not lend itself to jocularly. On and on in jocular vein went Mr. Pocklington until the President waved the gavel and gently asked, "May we have it?"

"I shall never get into full swing again," grumbled Peter P.

"That is the intention," said the President, and one wondered if a male President would have dared be so sweetly partial.

Ten more minutes only and Mr. Pocklington said; "At this stage perhaps I should explain just what this motion means." Well under a quarter-of-an-hour later he was winding up succinctly—"Let's get down to it. Spend some money or education will go down the drain."

Mr. Phillips rose with less sprightliness, and 'one wasn't sure if Mr. Pocklington or his own frequent bobbing up and down had made him tired. He informed us that he could not second the motion with pleasure because it was an indictment of the Council and of the inflexibility of some of the young-old men who occupied its higher places. As the "Grampappy" of the Council, he was sorry about all sorts of things, but the gist of the remarks was that it was illogical for the A.A.L. on the one-hand to be a "successful publishing house" and on the other to struggle to pay tutors out of the fees paid for correspondence courses. Subsidise and be damned.

Messrs. Paget (Cheltenham) and Westacott (Croydon) expressed the general mystification at what they took to be "inner Council intrigue," and explanatory answers by Messrs. Davey and Thompson, and the Honorary Secretary, apparently did little to clear the air, for Mr. Dudley then informed the meeting that it was his opinion that all this was a clash of personalities, and he could see "the dust in the corridors of power being swept up into a nice little whirlwind."

Mr. Atkinson asked the meeting "not to allow Moon and Tynemouth to jolly it out of court," and Mr. Thompson asked the movers to do the only decent thing and withdraw the motion. Neither of these requests was listened to, and the motion was lost after a recount.

After the Annual General Meeting, Miss Willson gave her Presidential Address. She gave a simple recipe for a Presidential Address—that it should be about something which is important, that it must not bore, and that it must be audible. To say that the cake justified the recipe is to ignore the individual skill of the cook. This was an outstanding address.

E. E. MOON.

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THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians
(Section of the Library Association)

EDITOR: W. G. SMITH.

Westminster Public Libraries, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.

VOL. 50, NO. 9

SEPTEMBER, 1957

The Net Book Agreement

Your Editor suggested last month that the Net Book Agreement, so far as it affects libraries should be abolished. Two Chief Librarians now give their views :—

From: L. G. Lovell, Chief Librarian of Rotherham :—

Congratulations on raising the question of the Net Book Agreement. Many thousands of pounds a year of our grossly inadequate book funds are ending up in the pockets of booksellers rather than as books on our shelves as a result of this restrictive practice. Another point, and an important one, which you do not mention is that it is one of the means used to keep in existence the couple of hundred libraries which are too small to operate efficiently: the immediate result of ending the Agreement would be that larger libraries, buying multiple copies of titles, could negotiate far better terms than the very small ones, which would surely bring home to inefficiently small authorities the invidiousness of their position in a manner far more telling than any available at the moment.

Don't think, though, that you will get the majority of chief librarians to support you. The present system is nice and easy: it relieves the chief librarian of any obligation to take positive action to secure for his authority as good or better terms than his neighbours. It might also be that the narrower profit and overheads margin which would follow from the ending of the Agreement would result in a drastic diminution of the scale of hospitality extended by booksellers to their customers—to an end, perhaps, of the round of dinner parties and visits to booksellers' "stock rooms" (stocked mostly with bottles) which for many chief librarians are a pleasant feature of the Library Association Conference. Nor are you likely to get much support from the Library Association: a correspondence with them which I had earlier this year on the subject, and the action taken by the Association to oppose and negativate an attempt to obtain an improvement in terms which originated in Sheffield a couple of years ago, leaves me in no doubt that the L.A. will oppose any attempt to get the Agreement ended.

The Net Book Agreement may have been all very well before the war, when profit and overheads margins on books were fairly reasonable and the amount spent by libraries was relatively small. In these days those of us who come into contact with *efficient* booksellers, small as well as large, are under no illusions as to the profits made in the business, though, as these firms are all private and not public companies to obtain figures is very, very difficult. The ending of the Agreement would result in keener competition and reduced profit margins for booksellers.

and an increase in their efficiency and economy (as an illustration of the last point, perhaps, the redundancy of the dozens of booksellers' travellers who waste librarians' time for no useful purpose, might become obvious when, as a local authority would contract with a bookseller for so many thousands of pounds worth of business at so many per cent discount, their efforts could not bring their employers an increased slice of the available cake). The saving would end up on our shelves in the form of more books purchasable out of a fixed book fund.

From E. V. Corbett, Chief Librarian, Wandsworth, and a member of the L.A. Council:—

I was interested in your August leader with reference to the Net Book Agreement. I share your enthusiasm for a bargain, having also served my apprenticeship in the Indian bazaars, but I frankly cannot see Local Government Authorities, *allowing* their Chief Librarians to act in a manner which any business firm would naturally *expect*.

No, sir, it is extremely doubtful whether Librarians would "be free to make the best terms they can with the booksellers." Rather do I fear that they would be fettered with the time honoured system of tenders which, unsatisfactory as it is, does safeguard the integrity of both Council and officer. In this instance, however, the bookseller who quoted to supply so many thousand pounds worth of new books, at the greatest discount, would get the business. If they were lucky, Librarians might get the right firm of booksellers. On the other hand, the firm that offered the largest discount could well be the one with the least experience of the book trade; in other words, "an ordering house for books." All the straightforward titles would be supplied without difficulty but the books which needed search would be very tardy in making their appearance, if at all.

If the Librarian were permitted to use his book knowledge and business acumen to the benefit of his Authority, then it would undoubtedly be advantageous to the latter if there were no Library Licence. However, in view of the various controls that Councils have to impose upon themselves and their officers, I frankly feel that at this stage the best course of action the Library Association could take, would be to press for increased Library Licence discounts for quantities. Thus there could be negotiated a sliding scale of discounts according to the amount an authority spent with any one bookseller. While this practice might not give the Librarian the personal satisfaction of striking a bargain at each deal, it would at least place the larger spending authorities on a more equitable business basis.

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Fewer Chartered Librarians?

A. C. Jones suggested in July that we should restrict the number of Chartered Librarians as a means of raising salaries. A selection of readers' views are now printed.

What of the Special Librarian ?

What of the special librarian? If such a practice is carried out, the many and varied, newly-formed and expanding special libraries will shortly find themselves without qualified librarians, which would surely be a retrograde step to the days when the library of a specialised concern was the part-time duty of a clerk or typist. If, as A. C. Jones says, there is such, or going to be such an enormous superfluity of Chartered public librarians, I can only suggest that there must be many among them who, if they knew of the untapped opportunities in special libraries, would try their luck in that field. Though there may be less power over one's colleagues in consequence of generally smaller staffs, the interest and responsibility of the job and the inventiveness usually required is a full reward for the constant hard work often needed.

Should such an undesirable limit of Chartered Librarians occur, thus decreasing the number in special libraries, it is surely probable that people wishing to become special librarians will desert the Library Association wholesale for ASLIB and the ASLIB examinations when they materialise. I make no comment on the merits or demerits of this.

As a postscript:—Will the Library Association, when calculating the number of Chartered Librarians required, take into consideration those vacancies notified to ASLIB? What, in fact, will be the relationship with ASLIB in such a matter?

IRIS H. NAPIER.

Half a Librarian . . .

I couldn't agree more with the many disquieting (but nevertheless true) features about our jobs and salaries mentioned by A. C. Jones.

Even without the proposed N.A.L.G.O. "salary freeze" for the Cinderellas of the Local Government Service, the Library Service always appears to lag well behind with salary scales.

It is of no wonder that right from the outset of their careers, young staff are discouraged from ever becoming professionally qualified. Local authorities seldom offer anything like a suitable grant to library students contemplating full-time attendance at a library school—even the Library Association does not offer to assist financially. After considerable sacrifices in leisure, the now qualified librarian is not even guaranteed a worth-while remuneration for his new professional status.

The customary pittance of A.P.T.I offered to successful Registration candidates is a studied insult when compared to practically every other branch of Local Government. I know of several Architectural Assistants, unqualified, who commenced on A.P.T. III, or IV, or even on A.P.T.V, and a new unqualified entrant in a Town and Country Planning Department commencing with A.P.T.III. The Surveying Departments provide even a rosier picture as the qualified Associates in this branch

can pick and choose their posts at A.P.T.VI.

Although A. C. Jones proposes that Librarians should be "hard to get," or in short supply, in order to create a demand for qualified staff, the present attitude of several authorities appears to be that of "half a librarian is better than none."

The lack of response for low-graded professional posts is causing more and more authorities to accept partly-qualified staff at cut price. Until the Library Association take steps to block this breach of professional etiquette and ostracise from the Association members who help to keep up these low standards, Library qualifications will diminish in value and both the higher salaries and the better status we hope to acquire will remain another pipe dream.

RAYMOND WILSON, *Senior Assistant, Weston-super-Mare.*

Obsolete Examinations

(1) If all public libraries were to adopt the system of dividing staff into "professional" and "non-professional" categories, then staff for purely routine and "counter" duties could be selected from people who fall below the standard required before L.A. exams. can be taken; while those whom it is intended to train for professional posts could be chosen from the pick of school-leavers. This would then have the effect of reducing the number of entrants into libraries who are eligible for training; and it would also avoid wastage of useful people on mechanical and repetitive work, after a few months of which they usually leave.

(2) If, in spite of the reduction of candidates eligible for examination by the L.A. which would result from implementing staff-division, a competitive examination were to be found necessary to reduce this number even further, the time to hold such an examination is surely before the person embarks on his career; and not to wait until he is ready to qualify for higher posts. The number of Chartered librarians who are quite lacking even in general knowledge—not to mention the word "culture"—is indeed surprising. One would think from the unworldliness of some of them that libraries were still only to be found in monasteries.

(3) The present Registration examination is certainly in need of considerable overhaul. The disproportion in the syllabus is such that one really wonders how a body of professional librarians ever came to agree to holding such an examination in the first place. Three-sevenths of the syllabus is taken up with classification and cataloguing—which is merely a technique employed by librarians to save time in finding books, etc., while only one-seventh of the examination is concerned with the true business of the librarian—"Assistance to readers." Precisely why all that cerebation about private-presses; Aldus, Garamond and so on is included in an examination at Registration level I do not know. Its effect can only be undesirable; for it either encourages the Incunabula-crank and the Diazo-chromo-litho-bore, and other nightmare creatures whose proper place is in the works of Edward Lear or Heironymus Bosch, but who are found all too often in public libraries; or, on the other hand, as a friend of mine once said, it encourages callow youths without a ha'porth of sensibility and taste in art, to pass airy judgments on the works of bygone centuries. The Admin. paper is at least about running a library—albeit badly, since it is tied up with fusty mumbo-jumbo, and fossilised notions on library architecture. Of the

papers in Group D it is foolish to waste time in criticism.

But having read the proposals for changes in the Registration examination, I feel that there is certainly to be no change for the better. Just to give one example: one of the *compulsory* papers is to be "The organization of knowledge in libraries," which is nothing more than the theory of cataloguing and classification. This will now include the Colon Scheme, and the ALA cataloguing code. But when one reads the large number of codes and schemes and theories which will form the subject matter of this particular paper, one can only assume that the examination, in order to cover this subject adequately, will commence at about five o'clock in the morning and carry on until ten in the evening—unless the whole business is cut short by the invigilator fainting through lack of food.

It seems obvious that more than one paper will have to be set in order to cover this part of the syllabus properly. But later on one sees that the *practical* cataloguing and classification paper is to be *optional*. So that the muddle, disproportion, and general confusion in the new proposals for the Registration examination are worse than in the existing syllabus.

I apologise for the length of these remarks, which are occasioned through Mr. Jones's mention of the new proposals in his article.

(4) I would like to conclude by suggesting that the written form of examination is not the only means of judging aptitude for professional status, and since we are so anxious to place ourselves in a position equal to that of other professions we should adopt the practice of oral examination for some part of the syllabus. This is the rule for nurses, doctors, teachers, officers in the Armed Services, chartered accountants and other professions, and I see no reason why it should be thought an unfair means of examining library students. It would also have the effect of eliminating the aforesaid cranks and bores and literary recluses. I may add that I recommend such a form of examination knowing well that I would be the last person likely to pass one.

I think that careful selection by the methods I have mentioned, coupled with a complete change of emphasis in the examination syllabus, will result in fewer but more highly qualified candidates for library posts in the future.

R. LLOYD, *Tottenham Public Libraries.*

NOTICE OF ELECTION

Nominations are invited for the following Officers and Councillors of the Association for the year 1958:

Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Editor.

Nine nationally elected Councillors, three of whom must be under thirty years of age on 1st January, 1958.

A member under the age of thirty may stand for election as national councillor in either category, but if he/she wishes to stand as an "under-thirty" candidate this should be stated specifically, together with the age of the nominee as at 1st January, 1958.

Nominations must be made in writing by two or more members of the Association, countersigned by the nominee, and reach me not later than 15th October, 1957.

E. E. MOON, *Honorary Secretary,*

Central Library, Kensington High Street, London, W.8.

A Zest Of Lemon

OUR blessed *Assistant* has now become a penny arcade. The price of opting A.A.L. once a year we are privileged to have a monthly panoramic view of what the butler saw in the world. A fascinating landscape uncoils as we turn the handle and pictures flicker into life. Generally it is a battle scene with the Mobiles lumbering across the front exchanging volleys of thunders. In another corner some Council Olympian may be seen as he perishes on earth, shot down on the wing. In a distant grove, Mr. Hepworth is seen belabouring an academic colleague as he mouths aspirations to rapt spectators, while in the classic forecourt of a dominating house whose stones are sooty, a mild-mannered gentleman is seen strangling Birmingham by the throat (to his surprise). On all sides the contemporary library scene scuffle and shout derisively, great and small, thrown, maids from Marylebone snipe crisply at males from Hove, and the air is rent with abuse and counter-abuse. Our debate is waged amid hot cannon smoke (one fears that the next penny may even witness it demonstrably proved), our crystalline virtue is tested against local authority Machiavellis in various odious parts of the landscape until all the sound and fury fades on the last page and the stunned Average Reader retires fatigued from the contest.

In this bloody arena in July descended a bardic figure, wreath awry, on to a marmoreal podium where he posed before a doubly fascinated gaze twanging Apollo's lyre and emitting puns from the Thousand Best Quotes. Unpredictably enough, Latin enters the lists, and it is the advent of such classical equipage as Barnum and Bailey diorama that has aroused me to utter a few croaks from my toadstool—you haven't, by the way, a choice Greek with which to enhance my vatic utterance?

To interwine strife our journal seems bent on adding spice to the form of quips from the Masters; the recipe is now Latinity and a dash of my querulous point, do they mix? *Nugis addere pondus*¹ (I shall make no such craven concessions to your readers' classical deficiencies; I shall translate unaided) is to render the nullity of the writing even more resonant, or was our bardic Apollo, Mr. Jones, underlining the theme merely? *Rara avis in terris nigroque simillima cygnus*. Jones may well be, but need he emphasise it so blatantly? And, by the point, which oracle is going to preside over the monthly battle between Apollo or Cassandra? There is only room for one in this peepshow when the two clash the din is more cacophonous than that produced by the entire corps of library mercenaries hacking each other in a violent prop sword-play. We will not embarrass by asking 'Do the Assistants so spuriously rage?' for we know. Instead we will give a word of advice from the pit: first to Apollo, *les citations . . . chassent l'ingenueuse, chose excellente, lorsqu'on n'en abuse pas*,² then to Cassandra (who represents, of course, inspiration flowing into the Editorial chair) *brûler n'est pas répondre*,⁴ or, keep it in English.

I apologise for interrupting the performance with such abstractions but we do need just one redolence at a time in the flavoured drinks from the Bierian spring, just one zest of lemon, so that our palates be not confused. Or one of the bibliopotamoi may be asked to offer the management a *bunch* of lemons.

D. E. GERARD, *Deputy, Nottingham*

¹ Horace; ² Juvenal; ³ Fourier; ⁴ Desmoulins.

Pass Percentage

By E. F. Ferry

THE Library Association, by its Charter, is an examining body, and as such is charged with the task of maintaining minimum standards of qualification for members of the profession. Not unnaturally, the Association's examiners are frequently subject to criticism based upon the number of failures in each examination. As candidates continue to submit themselves to test twice a year, it is perhaps, advisable to enquire into the causes of failure and, *ipso facto*, of the criticisms.

The obvious reason for failure is lack of ability to muster sufficient marks, a trite but true statement. Several factors contribute to this state of affairs but it is as well to state at the outset that (a) examiners are disinterested persons as far as the (to them) anonymous candidates are concerned; their interest lies solely in standards; (b) all candidates are assured of receiving the most careful consideration *if their scripts warrant it*. There are, of course, obvious failures, but there are also those who, for a variety of reasons, fail to satisfy the examiner entirely but raise sufficient doubts in his mind to justify a second or even a third scrutiny. Senior examiners are there to give the second scrutiny, and if doubt still remains, the subject assessors consider the scripts for the third time. Marking standards are set at meetings of examiners, and in any case assessors make sample checks of marked papers. It is difficult, therefore, to find any valid reason for laying the blame for a distressingly low percentage at the examiners' doors. It may well be that the candidates themselves must bear a considerable load of responsibility, and it is this aspect which it is proposed to investigate.

Some will find difficulties in passing examinations however well prepared they may be—nerves may play a shattering part in this, and to those so afflicted we can only offer sympathy and the thought that adequate preparation gives sufficient background to see anybody over the appropriate obstacle. Failure to prepare oneself for an examination invites trouble, of course, and those incredible papers which can muster fewer than thirty marks for six answers ("ducks" have been known) are beyond the scope of this article. Such candidates are either foolhardy, foolish, or "tuition proof."

A recent issue of the "Journal of Education" paid considerable attention to the teaching of English in schools, so, as words are the vehicles of examinees' knowledge, it may be well to pay heed to the lamentations of this periodical. Plain English, Clear Expression, Straight Thinking, Good Communication were some of the headings under which the matter was discussed. They apply equally to our own examinations. A contributor alleges that the trouble begins at the "eleven plus" stage, continues through to further education and is the result of a misplaced emphasis on the type of question which calls for a slick, telephonic type of answer. This may well be, but anyone who works among books should be able to imbibe sufficient style to offset any shortcomings resulting from primary and secondary education. In all Library Association examinations, style, spelling and grammar are taken into account in marking. It is therefore distressing to note the comment of one Final examiner in English literature that some scripts submitted were, in his opinion, below G.C.E. standard. Candidates are expected to write good

English, and it follows that practice in written work is essential. This is one of the reasons why so many correspondence course tutors feel strongly that the mere sending of a course is not enough, and that answers to questions are a most important part of the course. Such an argument is borne out by at least one statement from an examiner which reads, "Many entrants have enough factual knowledge to pass the examinations comfortably if only they would shape their knowledge into the form required by the question and would write at adequate length." Again, from another examiner we learn that "I feel that some candidates must know more than they show in these answers, but the manner of presentation conceals the knowledge so effectively as to invite failure."

Two or three points arise from these two statements. First of all, "write at adequate length" does *not* mean padding, which merely tires and irritates the examiner. It cannot conceal lack of knowledge, and it may well lead to further error. The statement simply calls for as full and lucid an answer to a question as can be expected in the time allowed. Secondly, "the form required by the question"—here we have yet another version of a general complaint. Too many candidates fail to answer the question as set. A detailed account of the A.A. code of 1908 is not an answer to a question on the A.L.A. rules of 1949, but the mistake has been made often enough. Definitions where full answers were called for, and vice versa, are not unknown. Some candidates answer the wrong number of questions in a sectionalized paper, others number the questions wrongly. Failure to complete the necessary number of answers may be due to slowness or lack of knowledge, but it is also undoubtedly due to a tendency on the part of some candidates to enjoy themselves on a familiar question far beyond the time allowed.

To sum up this paragraph then:—

- (1) Read the instructions at the head of the paper.
- (2) Answer the questions as set.
- (3) Read through the paper, marking the obvious questions to tackle, and noting *at once* any stray facts which may apply to other questions.
- (4) Note not only the subject of the question, but also the angle from which the subject is to be approached.
- (5) In multi-part questions, make sure that the right number of parts is tackled.
- (6) Leave a little time to re-read answers.
- (7) Do not pad, or drown facts in irrelevancies.

So far, I have dealt with what might be called the mechanics of the matter. The subjects of the L.A. examinations are too diverse to deal with individually, but several themes recur throughout the whole range. The first which comes to mind is a lament for the lack of general knowledge. This appears to show in those questions which call for examples of books known to the candidate. Some of the examples are, to put it politely, weak. Candidates at all levels must realise that if they are to become professional librarians, they must work at the job. The examination syllabus is a framework—a skeleton, if you like, or a model, if you do not—and it is up to the candidate to clothe it with knowledge. Factual knowledge gained in courses of study goes part of the way, but general knowledge must complete the journey. Awareness of current affairs, reading knowledge of current and past authors, acquaintance with a wider range of professional periodicals than the

usual five—these should be part of a librarian's life, not merely part of an examination course.

It is this lack of background knowledge which probably gave rise to the following outburst in an examiner's report—"vagueness, triteness, laziness of response to the particular question, insufficient factual knowledge, mechanical repetition of text-book opinion." Quite a calendar, and one which applies to more than one candidate. Read as widely as possible. There should be sufficient opportunity in any library to maintain a reasonable standard of general knowledge in its widest sense.

Local pride is a thing to be commended but anyone who has read the McColvin report or who has visited many libraries on his travels must realise that library provision in this country varies a great deal from place to place. Candidates would be well-advised not to regard their own libraries as typical, or as embodying all that should be done in librarianship. A question calling for a description of local practice may be answered quickly and confidently, but to quote that practice (acknowledged or anonymous) in an answer to a general question is asking for trouble. The examination syllabus calls for the ideal—most of our libraries fall short of it in one way or another. It follows, therefore, that assistants should build up a composite picture as far as possible by travelling outside the walls of their own libraries. Lessons should be combined with experience.

The Library Association, in its wisdom, has decreed that nobody shall be admitted to the register before the age of 23, including three years' experience in an approved library. It follows, therefore, that premature rushing into examinations is not only rash but unprofitable. I must speak generally here, knowing full well that there are assistants capable of becoming Fellows at the age of 21 if necessary, but there are many who are entering far too early. As in all professions, there is a language in librarianship which must be mastered before a person can move easily in his particular job. Assistants would be well-advised to learn this professional language before plunging into the First Professional Examination. The same applies at Registration level. Over-eagerness to qualify can bring disappointment, frustration and eventual dissatisfaction with a profession which really has many attractions. Entry without adequate preparation or experience wastes the candidate's, tutor's and examiner's time. It is chancy, to say the least, to select parts of the syllabus and to concentrate upon those parts in the hope that some sort of mental telepathy will link the thought processes of examiner and examinee, just as it is inviting trouble to attack the Winter examinations after a Summer failure without pondering on the cause of failure and revising thoroughly.

Other causes of failure could be cited—a fine summer, an energetic social life, even development of interest in the opposite sex. These are very well in their place, but deviation from a set course of study must reduce the chances of success. The Register and Examinations Executive Committee is truly concerned about the low pass percentage in its examinations and it does *not* lay down the number of candidates who should pass. This has been suggested off the record and, no doubt, in a fit of spleen, but the barrier between success and failure can only be removed by the candidates themselves. Reasonable knowledge of a subject and an ability to express that knowledge in a sensible, coherent way are all that are asked for. Master these two, and we shall no longer deplore the pass percentage.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ASSISTANCE TO READERS

Tutors' comments edited by:

E. F. Ferry

BELIEVING in the adage that no news is good news, we continue in the way of concentrating upon a narrow field in the absence of adverse criticism. This is not mental laziness, but the result of a conviction that it is better to give fuller treatment to a few subjects than to nibble at the greater part of the examinations. This time, books come under the microscope—their exteriors in bibliography, their interiors in book selection and assistance to readers. The range of contributors has again been widened to include correspondence course tutors, lecturers and at least one practising specialist. As far as possible, factual questions have been ignored as students can check these for themselves.

The bibliographical side of the L.A. syllabus is becoming an increasingly difficult one to cover. New techniques arrive regularly, reference books and standard texts are revised, replaced and augmented far too often for the student's peace of mind, cherished theories in historical bibliography are subjected to critical bombardment (i.e., knocked for six). To crown all, we have the prospect of a major revision of the examination syllabus. However, students will, no doubt, continue bloody but bowed. Of all subjects, B4 and 5 are perhaps the most testing in that it is more than desirable that there should be some first-hand acquaintance with processes and books. The mere sight of a microtext, a paper-mill, a lino slug or a new edition of an encyclopaedia can do far more good than hours of reading. Field work is most important and any doubts raised by our contributors should be investigated with this in mind.

Once more, we have to thank those who have supplied material for this issue and who, fortunately, need not remain anonymous. They include Messrs. S. Barton, A. Chapman, N. E. Dain, R. E. Grimshaw, W. A. Smith and E. A. Willats.

REGISTRATION B.IV : BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Q.1. *You are compiling an extensive list of incunabula. What form of arrangement would you adopt, and what would be the nature of the normal entry in this list?*

The use of the word "list" in a question on documents associated with scholarly purposes is not satisfactory. It may be understood that a catalogue of one collection is wanted or equally well that an index of one or more collections is concerned. Neither may be in mind. Without limiting the terms the production of a standard bibliography may be the purpose for compiling the list. The kind of arrangement and the "normal" entry are relative to the purpose and character of the compilation. Such a lack of definition does not lead to the best work of students, nor accord with the precise standards expected of a profession.

If it is assumed that "list" means "check-list" a work comparable with the *Finding list of early English books to 1640 in libraries of the British Isles*, compiled by D. Ramage, or with W. W. Bishop's *A checklist of American copies of S.T.C. books* would be in question. Such a list need provide only titles of works or editions which are not in the S.T.C. while quoting for S.T.C. titles either

brief indentificatory headings (author, main word or words of title, date, or place) and S.T.C. numbers or solely S.T.C. numbers. Any more would be wasteful.

If a standard bibliography is in mind (an extensive list may be a basis for one) full descriptive entries will be required for any items which are not discoverable in one of the more widely available bibliographies or catalogues, while short entries will be suited to items described in the latter. In the last case reference numbers from the full descriptions as available elsewhere should be included. Some such method is illustrated in the catalogue of Cambridge University incunabula.

A library catalogue such as *Books printed abroad in languages other than English before 1700 and now in Bristol Reference Library*, may have a lesser purpose than that of a standard bibliography. It may be used as a guide to the collection for direct use when the books may be handled. A full description would not in such a case be a "normal" entry which would be made to enumerate the titles and editions, to refer to full descriptions, and to point to such features as provenance, significant variants, deficiencies, additions, and supposed binders. In that respect the Bristol list is far from "normal" or ideal. Notes on ownership are particularly significant because *adversaria* and inscriptions may throw light on the use of the work, or contemporary opinion on the subject, while the establishment of former ownership may provide evidence of sources of the owners' own writings.

In carrying out the practical work involved the most minute comparison of items for the list with full descriptions of other copies must be made as the title may cover many printers' variants or even author's revisions within the same printing during that age which provided foundations for modern scholarship. A variant copy needs notes on all known differences. The reasons for variants may be accidental or purposeful and no chances should be taken of obscuring data which may assume new significance in the hands of the scholar. Different editions of incunabula nearly always justify the provision of full descriptions.

Arrangement may be intended to show the evolution of printing and the growth of scholarship, when it may be based on Maittaire, Bradshaw, and Proctor (the latter did not invent Proctor Order). It may be intended to further the recording of a national literature of an early period when the order might be that of an outstanding bibliography—probably simply by authors or dates.

A classified arrangement is not appropriate unless the works fall into distinctive groups. Such a grouping might be more useful than Proctor Order for a comprehensive national survey of incunabula, but the vague terms of the question do not allow more than surmise to be made. If the materials were sufficiently extensive such distinctive groups as collected royal decrees, European and Oriental romances, scientific books, service books, bibles, devotional and philosophic works, and classical literature might be more informative and practically useful than Proctor Order, or date order.

Q. 6. *What is the present position concerning private press production in Britain? Briefly and critically describe the work, SINCE 1945, of any private press with which you are familiar, or list FIVE pre-war private presses and name ONE important work issued by EACH.*

Whilst a comparison between the two stages of Private Press work is not specifically asked for, candidates would be expected to make, at least, a brief examination of this point. The Press work of to-day has changed considerably both in importance and value, serving now purely as a means of personal satisfaction at the hands of the owner of the Press, with no formulated desire to influence either typography or book design as such. Types used are invariably those available from the stocks of the commercial printing houses who, in most cases, carry out the actual machining of the texts, the influence of the individual being confined, with certain exceptions, to the type-setting and lay-out as well as the ultimate binding of the book.

One of these exceptions is the *Golden Cockerel Press*, and this Press stands pre-eminent in this field to-day. No special types have been designed or cast for them, the ordinary commercial Monotype, in a face most suited to the work

in hand being used. The type, after being cast, is re-assembled by hand, in order to achieve the precision and detail of justification required by this Press. Their actual productions are confined to selected books, not always of a popular nature, but yet of merit, which after being set up, are machined slowly and carefully, with frequent stoppages for checking the printed pages. Equal care is taken in the choice of illustrations, in the editorship of their texts, resulting in a work of scholarship and beauty.

Of the modern presses, the peak period was just after the last war, when over twelve private printing presses were in operation; despite this, less than one hundred books have been issued by them. Information about these presses has to be sought for, and is completely factual, so that candidates not possessing this definite information could not have answered this part of the question.

No one factor has had a greater influence on the value of the modern Private Press work than that of the multiple production of books. During the age of Morris and his contemporaries, the issue of many copies of certain books was encouraged. To-day, no such thing can be accomplished, as the whole of the energies and resources of these Private Presses are concentrated on the one book, of which perhaps only one copy or at least a very few copies can be printed. This limits quite severely the field over which they are known, and also the amount of commissioned work they are able to undertake.

For those candidates who did attempt this part of the question, there is quite a choice from which to choose. Apart from the *Golden Cockerel Press* and the *Hand and Flower Press*, no other has issued regularly any particular series of books, their whole production being restricted to a single book, or a projected series of which only a very few have been actually issued; an instance of this being James Guthrie's edition of Blake's "Song of Innocence," of which only eighteen copies out of an edition of two hundred copies were completed, due entirely to the extremely fastidious and painstaking methods he employed over each separate volume. Financial reward took no part in this stage of the work of the Private Press, nor did the artists look for it. The productions of the *Hand and Flower Press* are probably the best known Private Press books to-day, as they are distributed freely to many libraries. They are neat volumes, admirably suited to the purpose they serve.

For specific choice, candidates could number the following among the Presses available for discussion. The *Pear Tree Press* of James Guthrie, set up in Flansham, Sussex; the *Fair Oaks Press* of Ralph Chubb; the *Caseg Press* set up in Snowdonia by John Petts; the *Latin Press* of Guido Morris at St. Ives; the important *Hague Press* set up in High Wycombe by Rene Hague and Eric Gill; the *Ditchling Press* in Sussex; F. L. Lewis' press at Leigh-on-Sea; the peculiarly independent *Drake Johnson Press* at Padstow in Cornwall; the important *Hand and Flower Press* established at Aldington in Kent, by Erica Marx; the smaller *Caravell Press* set up by Carl Boirrie in Bloomsbury; the *Rampant Lions Press* of Will Carter at Cambridge, and the two important Presses subsidised by Lord Kemsley, the *Dropmore* and the *Queen Anne Presses*, both established in Bloomsbury; finally, the *Golden Cockerel Press*, which has maintained an unbroken tradition far surpassing any other similar Press.

Q.9. Indicate briefly, with reasons, the purposes for which EACH of the following methods may, in your opinion, legitimately be used: "bleeding," spiral binding, "perfect" binding, loose-leaf binding.

BLEEDING is basically a "display" feature, designed to emphasise, or draw special attention to an illustration, or other feature. In "bleeding," an illustration is run right up to the edges of the paper, and to be correct, should be trimmed on all bled edges. Use of this particular process does materially affect the cost of printing, as it is necessary to use a larger size sheet, with the consequent wastage on the text area and margins. These text and margin proportions cannot be reduced or altered to suit individual cases, and wherever possible, bled illustrations should not be incorporated with text matter, unless this be purely of an advertising nature where a fair amount of licence is expected, but should be allowed to occupy the whole of the page.

This process is very effective if not overdone, and is used especially for

showing off architectural features, machines of similar engineering aspects, and perhaps most effectively for reproduction of works of art. As such illustrations are full-size on rather larger blocks, difficulties arise when a re-print is being issued, as such re-prints are often on a smaller size sheet than was the original; the text matter presents no serious problem, but just how much of this bled illustration is to be cut away in order for it to fit on to this smaller page can make all the difference to the effectiveness of the picture. A great deal of use is made of this process in magazine and periodical display work, in which cases the exact juxtaposition of the text is perhaps not so serious as it might be with a printed book. Used in moderation, it can be a very attractive and effective process.

SPIRAL BINDING.

The great advantage of this method of binding is its flexibility. Books or pamphlets so bound lie perfectly flat when opened, making ease of reference to them. As such, it is ideal for use with time tables, small atlases or maps, guide books, periodicals, books containing tables, formulae or recipes. Where periodical supplements are issued, to be incorporated in an original work, the spiral, which acts on the principle of a loose-leaf binding, can be unwound so that the new issues can be added where necessary. The appearance of this style of binding detracts from its more general use, as far as libraries are concerned, especially as it is impossible to place any shelf mark or guide on the book, except on the front cover, where it is not readily seen. It is a style of binding that lends itself very well to the type of books mentioned, and it should not be too readily condemned because of its physical construction. Means could be found, quite easily, to exploit such books so that their value and use is not lost to libraries. In most cases of books bound by this method, a semi-art or glossy paper is used, strong enough to stand up to the strain imposed upon it; the thinner, poorer quality paper used in many time tables, recipe books and guide books would prevent this method being used, unless the publishers decided upon a change of policy.

PERFECT BINDING.

This is the pre-eminent method of "unsewn binding," and is based on the fact that the book is made up of separate and single sheets of paper and not in sewn sections as with a normally constructed book. The sheets are printed off in the normal manner, and after being assembled in correct order are trimmed along the inner edge, thus removing the folded joints, leaving the book as a collection of single sheets.

This style of binding can legitimately be applied to any type of book printed on an absorbent or semi-absorbent paper. It could not be used successfully on any smooth or art paper, as the success of the method depends entirely on the degree of absorption of the adhesive used. The modern plastic and polyvinyl glues are extremely strong, but just how well any book so bound will withstand library wear and tear will depend not so much on the strength of the adhesive, but on how far it has penetrated between the single sheets. Many books so bound are found to have whole sets of pages falling out, due entirely to the fact that the glue has not got between the pages themselves, so providing an additional strength. The use of this style of binding has become widespread during the last few years, publishers finding it more economical especially for fiction books. Books so bound are of course of no lasting value to a library, because it is not possible to re-bind them when they show signs of wear.

LOOSE-LEAF BINDING.

The application of loose-leaf binding is restricted to two fields of material; firstly to certain types of books; secondly to record and other statistical works. For books, it is used chiefly for quick-reference works, where it is necessary to make daily, weekly or other periodic amendments by the addition of supplements, these to be added to, or incorporated to an original work issued in this form. Works such as *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* is an example of this type of use.

The application of this method to record books, covers many aspects of

value to libraries, namely for sheaf catalogues, accession and stock records, newspaper returns, general accountancy records, and staff records, anything where either a constant building up of information, or the continual addition or withdrawal of material is regularly carried out, leaving the work complete and finished, as it stands. There are various styles of this binding, ranging from spiral or plastic grippers, to thong binders, ring binders, and post binders, each of which has its own advantages, but all providing a rapid and easy method of maintaining frequent changes of information.

REGISTRATION B.V : ASSISTANCE TO READERS

Q.1. *There is a great demand in public libraries for information on holidays at home and abroad. Describe the types of material to be provided for lending and reference, and the sources from which they can be obtained.*

This question will be answered best by the candidate with practical experience in a reference library or information service which sets out to provide information of this type and is participating in the scheme for Tourist Development in the U.K. sponsored by the British Travel and Holidays Association.

The best way in which to answer it would be, I feel, to give an account of the types of material which should be provided and which of these will be available for home reading and which for consultation on the library's premises alone (or can be loaned for a limited period or for a week-end perusal only).

Every type of question likely to be encountered should be met with appropriate material provided, e.g., some people will want to know how to get by boat from London to Glasgow, from whom a launch can be hired to go on the Thames, will it be high or low tide at Southend on a certain day or what is the rate of exchange in relation to the English pound in Austria?

There is far more material for which the library would normally only possess one copy and which could therefore only be consulted on the premises and not taken away.

Into this category would come time-tables. The railway ones should include the *A.B.C. Monthly Railway Guide*, which gives the principal services in "easy-to-understand" form and the *British Railways Regional Guides* and/or *Bradshaw's Railway Guide*. Services to Ireland and Scotland should not be omitted.

For foreign railway travel there is *Cook's Continental Time-table* (which is particularly useful for giving, under "Foreign Monies," the monthly average rate of exchange of Continental countries) and also, in another section, passport and visa restrictions).

French Railways (S.N.C.F.) publish their own time-tables, which may be obtained on application.

The *A.B.C. Quarterly Shipping Guide* lists the principal world liner and passenger steamer services.

The *A.B.C. World Airways Guide* gives all world air routes, lists of chartered air services, times of arrival and departure.

The *A.B.C. Coach and Bus Guide* gives the principal coach and bus services. But for details of each operating coach and bus company's service, a complimentary copy of the bus or coach time-table may be obtained from the operating company's head office.

L.P.T.B. Green Line and country bus time-table should be provided.

Accommodation lists will mostly be found in the official guides of the British holiday resorts, but for hotel accommodation there are the publications, *Hotels and Restaurants in Great Britain and Ireland* (British Hotels and Restaurants Association) and *Hotels in the British Isles* (British Travel and Holidays Association), the *R.A.C. Guide* and the *A.A. Handbook* (also one for Scotland and one for Ireland). The A.A. publications are only to be obtained by members of the Automobile Association.

For motorists the R.A.C. Continental Handbook is invaluable for those who want to take their vehicles abroad; private aeroplane owners will want to see the *Air Touring Guide to Europe*.

Let's Halt Awhile, edited by Ashley Courtenay; *Signpost*, and the *Good Food Guide* are useful to hotel and country inn seekers and gourmets.

The Jewish Chronicle Travel Guide and R. Crombie Saunders' *A Guide to the Fishing Inns of Scotland*, and *Where to Fish*, are examples of specialised books.

A Guide to Trust Houses (Trust Houses Ltd.), Poulgy's *Les Auberges de France* (Club de Sans-Souci), *The Illustrated Guide to Swiss Hotels* (Swiss National Tourist Office), *Where to stay in Scotland* (Scottish National Tourist Board).

The British Travel and Holidays Association invites public libraries to co-operate with them in having available to enquiries a copy or copies of the Official Guide and lists of available accommodation. In order to facilitate this, a batch of several hundred printed postcards is distributed annually by the B.T.H.A. to co-operating libraries. The local authority, on receipt of the card, sends free of charge to the library a copy or copies of its official guide, if it is an authority co-operating in the scheme.

Librarians should bear in mind the present-day cost of producing guides, and not expect twenty copies of an official guide from a minor holiday resort in the Highlands.

The B.T.H.A. also distributes posters and holiday publicity material, publishes folders and guides, and the magazine, *Coming Events in Britain, Calendar of Events in Britain, Special Occasions*, and a wealth of material.

The National Institute of Adult Education publishes a six-monthly guide to Summer Schools called *Residential short courses*; the London Council of Social Service Arts Bulletin and *Whats On in London*, deal with events in the capital.

The Youth Hostels Association and the International Youth Hostel Association, the Holiday Fellowship, the Ramblers' Association issue their guides; there are the directories of Holiday Camps and Caravans and Chalets, the Camping Club of Great Britain's list of Camping Sites (the handbook is for members only).

Foreign guide books which should certainly be available in all lending departments are the *Fodor Guides*, the *Guides Nagel*, *Guides Bleus*, *Michelin*, *Baedekker* and *Muirhead's, Europe Touring Guide*, etc.

British topographical guides include Ward Lock's *Red Guide Books*, Muirhead's *Blue Guides*, *Shell Guides*, the *County Books* (Robert Hale), the regional and individual Ministry of Works guides to the principal Ancient Monuments, Murray's *Architectural Guides* to the Counties of England, *The Little Guides* (Methuen).

Some of these should also be in any good Reference Library.

Maps should be in both reference and lending departments. A set of Ordnance Survey One-Inch and Bartholomew's maps of Ireland and the *Cartes Blondel la Rougery* for France should suffice for all except the larger reference libraries, plus good atlases and guides.

But the Lending Library should include $\frac{1}{2}$ in. and 1in. maps of the Ordnance Survey and the Bartholomew's series. For foreign maps, there are the Hallwag, Blondel la Rougery, Michelin, Shell and other series.

Rates of Exchange can be found for Europe in Cook's *Continental Time-table* and the *Financial Times* gives world rates in the money market. Worthy of highest commendation is the recent publication of the Swiss Bank Corporation, *British Exports and Exchange Restrictions Abroad*.

High and low tide is given in such a nautical almanac as Brown's; the Meteorological Office's *Averages of Temperature in the British Isles* is useful.

The Guild of Guide Lecturers publishes a list of guide/interpreters.

The overall picture for this country is given in *A Survey of Holiday Accommodation in the British Isles*, published, with detailed statistics, in 1951, by the British Travel and Holiday Association; another survey, in less detail, was published in 1955. The Annual Report of the B.T.H.A. for 1956 shows some of the

leaflets, posters, guides and types of holiday material which are available to public libraries participating in the Tourist Development scheme.

All this is what the public wanted and what every public library advertising holiday information could and should give. Anything less is unworthy.

Q. 2. Give examples of any THREE of the following: (a) a scheme of subject co-operation, (b) a scheme of regional co-operation, (c) a union list of periodicals, (d) a scheme of co-operative book purchase. Illustrate your answer in each case with descriptive notes.

(a) Co-operation between libraries interested in a particular subject field is developed to increase the efficiency of their service and to obtain the maximum coverage with the resources available. Co-operation may include the holding of meetings to discuss common problems; co-operative acquisition of books and periodicals to prevent unnecessary duplication; preparation of abstracts, indexes and union catalogues of periodical holdings; direct interlending between members; interavailability of readers' tickets and publication of guides to resources. The descriptive notes should be used to describe relevant features in the scheme selected as an example. Typical examples are:—

Standing Conference of Theological and Philosophical Libraries of London (S.C.O.T.A.P.L.L.).—Regular meetings are held to discuss mutual problems and a directory of members is published. Joint readers' tickets serve as an introduction to all libraries in the group. A union list of periodicals is maintained. There is co-operative purchase of books and periodicals and exchange of periodicals. An Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries was formed in October, 1956, to foster co-operation in this field on a national basis.

Co-operative Industrial and Commercial Reference and Information Services (C.I.C.R.I.S.).—Co-operation in the field of Commerce and Technology between public libraries, technical colleges and industrial libraries in the West London Area of S.E. Regional Board of Industry. Each of the public libraries specializes in certain technologies. A list of scientific and technical periodicals freely available within the area is published. Direct interlending between members is encouraged. Five union lists of basic materials are maintained, e.g., Abstracts and indexes at Hammersmith.

Other examples of subject co-operation on a regional basis are Sheffield Interchange Organization (SINTO); London Medical Libraries Scheme and E. Midlands Scheme for foreign languages. THE ASLIB subject groupings are examples of subject co-operation on a national basis.

(b) There are ten main schemes of library co-operation in Great Britain and they are adequately described in L.A. Pamphlet No. 2: *The regional library system*, by P. H. Sewell, 2nd ed. 1956.

Descriptive notes should include—Definition of the region served by the scheme and the types of libraries included; location of the Regional Bureau; procedure for locating requests within the region, e.g., union catalogue in Wales and Monmouthshire, S.E. Region, etc.; the zonal method in Yorkshire; circulation of stencilled lists in the North West with a limited union catalogue of special material; forms of co-operation within the region such as interlending, co-operative book purchase; subject specialization; publication of union list of periodicals.

(c) Union lists of periodicals may be national or regional in coverage and either general in scope or limited to a subject field. They may indicate library holding or simply list periodicals currently received. Descriptive notes should also indicate the period covered by the list, e.g., *World list of scientific periodicals* covers 1900 to 1950, B.U.C.O.P. from 17th century to the present day; arrangement of entries and details of periodicals excluded from the list—B.U.C.O.P. excludes newspapers first published after 1799, variant issues, periodicals not printed from type unless they are clearly of more than ephemeral interest, etc.

National examples are:—*British Union Catalogue of Periodicals* (B.U.C.O.P.) 1956; Gregory. *Union list of serials in the libraries of the U.S.A. and Canada*; *Union catalogue of the periodical publications in the university libraries of the British Isles*, 1936.

Regional examples:—*The London union list of periodicals*, 1951; *List of periodicals in the public libraries of Kent*, 1950; Periodicals currently received in the libraries of the North West, 1951.

Limited by subject:—*Survey of legal periodicals held in British libraries*, 1949; *World list of scientific periodicals*, 1900-1950; *Union list of scientific and technical periodicals in northern libraries*, 1955.

(d) Co-operative book purchase is organized between libraries to ensure that books which may not normally be added to the stock of any library in the group are purchased by at least one library and also to prevent unnecessary duplication.

An important example is the *Farmington Plan*. This is a scheme to ensure that at least one copy of every new foreign book and pamphlet that might reasonably be expected to interest a research worker in the U.S.A. will be acquired by an American library. Using the Library of Congress scheme as a basis, each co-operating library is allotted a subject field within which it is expected to acquire all relevant foreign material and to make it available either for inter-lending or photographic reproduction to other co-operating libraries.

In Great Britain co-operative book purchase is implicit in the schemes of subject specialization operating within the South Eastern, the Wales and Monmouth, the North Western Regions and the Metropolitan Special Collections.

The Metropolitan Scheme covers the London Boroughs and may be described as a typical example. The various subjects represented in Dewey's classification have been divided among the twenty-eight boroughs. Subjects are not distributed in strict order and related topics are allocated together. Each library is expected to expend a minimum of £200 each year, additional to the normal book fund, on the purchase of books and periodicals within the subject field allocated to it; to buy a copy of books listed in the B.N.B. costing more than 12s. 6d.; to collect older material either by purchase or as gifts and to buy and file periodicals on the subject. The other Regional schemes are less ambitious in that periodicals, foreign books and older material are not specifically included.

A different method is employed in the Northern and East Midland Regions. A monthly review is made of important books which have been published but not acquired and such books are systematically allocated for purchase to volunteer librarians within the region.

Mutual consultation about the purchase of costly books is a feature of the London Medical Libraries Co-operative Scheme.

Q.3. *Outline a course of TWO lectures on the use of a library to students of a County Technical College by either (a) a public librarian or (b) the librarian of the College.*

It will be assumed that the students have had no previous instruction and that (a) will be lectures on the use of the Public Library and (b) on the use of the Technical College Library, with references in each case to their complementary functions.

It is generally agreed that lectures on the use of a library are much more effective if accompanied by some form of practical work and a short period at the end of each lecture should be reserved for the purpose.

FIRST LECTURE.

(a) Library provides books, periodicals, pamphlets and other material for information and recreation. Arranged in departments according to function of material provided.

Reference Departments.—Information and study. Consultation of material on the premises. Definition of reference material, with examples. Local collection as background material to local industry and social conditions. Commercial and technical library—range of material of special interest to technical students, e.g., technical periodicals, standard works, trade catalogues, year books, etc. Facilities for study. Study rooms. Special services—register of translators, local societies, clippings file.

Lending Library.—Home reading. Wide range of fiction and non-fiction

available. Indicate range of stock by quoting examples. Readers' advisory service. Request service.

Periodicals Room.—Current periodicals displayed. Sets available on request.

Refer to other departments and to the function of Branch Libraries. Co-operation with industry in the district.

The Classification Scheme. Shelf arrangement. Plan of the departments.

The catalogue. Form of catalogue. Arrangement of entries. Significance of coloured guides. Variations in alphabetical arrangement. Explanation of the main entry, particularly collation. References.

Library publications—introduction to library, bulletins, catalogues.

Practical work—Questions prepared in advance on slips or cards for each student. Student will be required to find the class numbers of books, to locate books on the shelves, to list books on a particular subject and to trace information in books, using the catalogue and recording their answers for correction by the staff.

SECOND LECTURE.

How to use books and some types of reference material of particular interest to technical students.

The parts of a book and their purpose. Series title, title page, preface, table of contents, illustrations, introduction, bibliographies, index.

Periodicals.—Their value for recent contributions to a subject, especially science and technology. A large amount of material is only published in periodicals. Sets of periodicals maintained in the library. Description of any co-operative arrangements between the library, the college and local firms to avoid duplication. Guides to periodicals—visible index in the library, lists including union lists of periodicals available, indexes, abstracts and abstracting services. Facilities for provision of photo-copies.

Encyclopaedias, dictionaries.—General, English and foreign language. Special, scientific and technical. Authority, arrangement, use of index, bibliographies. Importance of cross-checking information by consulting several sources.

Standard Specifications.—Definition—regulations controlling composition, quality, size, shape, nature of industrial product. International Standards Association. British Standards Institute. American Standards Association. Guides to Standards.

Patents.—General description of inventions. Provisional specifications. System of numbering. Date of application and date of granting.

Bibliographies.—Definition. Scope, current or retrospective. Arrangement.

Examples of entries. Indexes.

Maps, atlases, gazetteers; Visual aids; Government publications may be described where time permits.

The lectures should be held in the library, preferably the technical library, and relevant material should be available for the students to examine.

Practical work will involve the use of this material by students to answer a series of set questions, prepared in advance.

(b) These lectures could follow the same arrangement as (a) with the following exceptions—the college librarian in the first lecture would describe the arrangement and the type of material provided in the technical college library. He would point out that the stock was selected to supplement the work of the college and that textbooks were excluded. Departments in the library would not conform to the public library pattern. The use of the library for the purpose of study and the importance of background reading should be stressed. Reference should also be made to the wider range of the public library stock.

The second lecture on the use of books and reference material will be the same for both lecturers.

Q.8. Give a description of ONE encyclopaedia from EACH of any THREE of the following countries, stressing the arrangement, scope, state of revision, etc.: U.S.A., France, Germany, Italy, Spain.

U.S.A.

Encyclopaedia Americana New edition. 30 vols. (1918-20) 1947 issue. 1949. The 1st edition was in 1903-4. Value of early editions.

The last complete revision was in the 1918-20 edition, but a policy of continuous revision is maintained. Strong on science, technology and commerce; important articles, signed by specialists. The bibliographies are uneven; illustrations numerous and of a good standard. Reviews and digests of outstanding works in music and literature are included.

Since 1943, the index has been alphabetical, but before then was classified. Since 1923, the *American Annual* has been issued as a supplement.

Collier's Encyclopaedia 20 volumes. 1949-51. Vol. 20 is a bibliography and an index. The articles are short, for the most part, and designed for High School and college standard. Articles are written by and signed by specialists. *Collier's Yearbook*, 1939.

New International Encyclopaedia 2nd ed. 23 volumes and 4 supplements. 1922-30.

In 1902-4, the work was in 17 volumes, preceded in 1886 by the *International Encyclopaedia* which in turn was preceded by *Alden's Library of Universal Knowledge*.

Vols. 1-23, A-Z. Vols. 24-25, Supplementary, 1925. Vols. 1-2, Supplement, 1930. Important articles by specialists, but unsigned. Contains many articles on specific subjects, e.g., Authors, giving the best editions and translations, articles on individual works and sometimes even famous characters. *The New International Year Book* is a supplement.

Columbia Encyclopaedia 2nd edition. 1951.

Brief bibliographies. Articles linked by cross-references.

Lincoln Library of Essential Information 19th edition. 1950.

For "daily reference, self-instruction and general culture." Includes useful tables. Arranged by large topics. Contains such information on the various wedding anniversaries as, e.g., iron, silver, paper weddings.

FRANCE.

Apart from the monumental work of Diderot and d'Alembert, 35 vols., 1751-80, the French encyclopaedias worthy of note include:—

La Grande Encyclopaedia 31 vols. 1887-1902.

Authoritative, signed articles, excellent bibliographies; many entries under small subjects. A great authority for medieval and Renaissance subjects and literature, history and biography of continental Europe. (Is becoming near-obsolete).

Grand Dictionnaire Universel du 19e Siecle 17 vols. 1866-90. Vols. 1-15, A-Z. Vol. 16 Supplement. Vol. 17 Supplement.

Combines the features of a dictionary and of an encyclopaedia. Articles on small subjects, including many on works of literature. Words and airs of 600 French songs. Good for European literature, biography and history.

Larousse du 20e Siecle 6 vols. 1928-33 (1948-9 issue) Ed. by P. Auge. Briefer articles than the *Grande Dictionnaire*. Popular illus.

The 1948-9 issue contains a green paper supplement. Popular wood-cuts guide the text, but these are somewhat old-fashioned! Good for Art.

Nouveau Larousse Universel 2 vols. 1948-9. 13, 168 engravings. Replaces the 1923 *Larousse*.

Larousse Mensuel Illustre 1907-40. 1948-. An alphabetical monthly supplement to the *Nouveau Larousse*. Contains larger illustrations and a cumulative

index. Note also "La seconde guerre mondiale." 1952.

Grande Memento Encyclopedique Larousse 2 vols. 1949-50.

Memento Larousse Illustre 1949.

Encyclopaedia Française 1935.

Subject-grouped under large classes. Each volume has an alphabetical index. General index to the final volume. Illustrations are good, but few. Issued in pamphlet loose-leaf form, but incomplete, not much bibliographical listing.

Dictionnaire Encyclopedique Quillet Edited by Raoul Mortier. (Quillet) 6 volumes. 1953.

Clartes Encyclopedie Pratique due Savoir Moderne, 1945-. 16 volumes, subject-headed under Matter, Life, Action, Thought; e.g., Tome XII. Les lois de l'action. XI Les grands faits de l'histoire.

GERMAN.

Brockhaus's Konversations—Lexikon. Der grosse Brockhaus. 12 vols. 1952-7. The illustrations are good, and there are select bibliographies. Some of the entries and longer articles in older editions are omitted.

Der Neue Brockhaus 4 vols. and atlas. 1936-48. (Much Nazi influence in the earlier volumes).

Herder's Konversations-Lexikon Der grösse Herder. 5th edition. 1952.

Meyer's Kleines Lexikon 4 vols. 1933.

Meyer's Konversations-Lexikon Leipzig. Bibliographies Institut. 8th ed. 1936. Vols. 1-9, 1936-42.

Very concise, unsigned articles. Good for heraldic illustrations. Good for geographical, scientific and technical subjects, but less comprehensive than *Brockhaus*.

Ersch, J. S. and J. G. Gruber. *Allgemeine Encyclopedie der Vissenschaften und Kunste* . . . 167 volumes. 1818-1850.

Zedler, J. H. *Grosses Vollständiges Universal Lexikon*. Halle, 64 vols. 1837-50. Supplement. 4 vols. 1751-4.

Scholarly, yet popular presentation.

ITALY.

Enciclopedia Italiana . . . 36 vols. 1929-1939.

di scienze, lettere ed arti . . .

Supplimento I. 1938. II. 1938-48. 3 volumes.

Some of the political articles were signed by such personalities as the late Signor Mussolini, Sig. Starace, etc. But it is a magnificent work, particularly fine for illustrations and for Art.

Enciclopedia Cattolica 1948—Commenced in 1948, by 1953 had reached vol. 11. Sponsored by an editorial committee of thirty, including two bishops. Strong on sacred art, church history, folk-lore and, of course, theology and religion.

SPAIN.

Enciclopedia Universal Illustrada Europeo-Americana. Madrid. Espasa-Calpe. 1905-1933. 70 vols. and 10 vols. of supplements. Annual and poly-annual Supplements, e.g., 1945-8. 1953.

Especially useful for the history of Spain and biography of both Spain and its colonies. The 1953 supplement covers the period 1945-8.

Long monographs, maps good, illustrations fairly good. Contains a foreign dictionary in six main languages and Esperanto.

FINAL PART I : BIBLIOGRAPHY AND BOOK SELECTION

Q. 5. *Why is a detailed examination of a 16th and 17th century book essential before recording it in a bibliography? What features should be looked for in such an examination, and why?*

The chief reason for making a detailed examination of a 16th or 17th century book is to discover that information about it which will be required for recording in the bibliography. Only when this information is set down in the form of a full standard bibliographical description, will it be possible to use the results of the examination for comparison with other copies or editions of the same book (especially when copies cannot be brought together physically).

Whereas few modern books display unusual or irregular features, books of the 16th and 17th centuries were usually irregular in several particulars. These were due to the methods of the compositor and printer at that period. The processes of composition especially in the setting-up of reprints, of printing and proof-correction on the press and the careful using up of paper (which was scarce) led to differences in copies and editions of the same book. It is the discovery of these differences and their recording in a bibliography which may result in information being discovered about the way the book was printed and its bearing on the transmission of the text.

Besides the information obtained for the purposes of the bibliographical description, the reading of prefaces, dedications and advertisements may lead to evidence being discovered relating to the authorship and composition of the book.

Two needs are thus served by a bibliographical examination: that of the bibliographer interested in the history of printing and the literary editor whose concern is the transmission of a literary text.

The features to be looked for in an examination may follow the order of the bibliographical description (but note this question does not ask you to describe such a description) or as follows under the important features. Not all the information which will be discovered can be economically recorded in the description, in fact some, e.g., the deterioration of woodcut capitals, can only be shown by facsimile illustrations of them.

TITLE-PAGES, ETC.

It will be necessary to record and transcribe title-pages, colophons or explicits. The information given in them may not be accurate. False and misleading details of printer and dates were common. Title-pages were used as an advertisement of the book and were usually contrived by the printer rather than by the author.

PAPER AND WATER-MARKS (including chain and wire lines).

(a) The position of the water-marks is, of course, significant in the determination of the format, which in itself is important since the method used for imposition can be discovered. The actual watermark used should be noted—it may be of assistance in determining or confirming the date of an undated or falsely dated book by reference to such a work as Briquet's *Les filigraines*.

(b) Chain and wire lines help to indicate format. If they run a different way from what is normal for the book or gathering, a cancel or forgery may be suspected.

(c) Cancels or forgeries may be suspected also from paper of a different texture or a stub of paper.

SIGNATURES.

(a) The signatures will need to be carefully examined. The sequence of the signatures and whether they commence on A or B or an arbitrary sign is of relevance in deciding whether a book is a first or revised edition or a reprint without revision.

(b) Gaps in the signatures may indicate the book was printed on different presses or by different printers. Repeated signatures, e.g., A, B, C, C, D, usually show a reprint.

(c) The position of a particular signature letter should be noted (in several copies). Any difference will be due to resetting.

CATCHWORDS.

Any departure from their correct use (i.e., if they are not to be found in the text of the page being examined) means a reprint or a revision. Catchwords were frequently copied from an earlier edition even though the particular page had been altered.

FOLIATION AND PAGINATION.

This should be noted, as printers were frequently careless in numbering folios and pages and gaps and repetitions in pagination may not be accompanied by gaps or repetitions in the text.

RUNNING-TITLES.

(a) Discrepancies in running-titles may give evidence of earlier forms of the title-page or of reprints.

(b) Running-titles may show reprints or cancels or other changes in the text. If the form of the running-title differs in different sections, it may mean that the book was composed on different presses or by different printers in parts.

TYPOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

This is most useful for the student of the history of printing and of little use for the student of the text. Occasionally it is of value in distinguishing variants and reprints by a comparison of measurements of distances across a selected page in different copies and the date of printing may be established or confirmed by an examination of the type used.

BORDERS AND INITIALS.

Borders, initials, ornaments and woodcut capitals may assist in dating and deciding the order of editions by (a) noting deterioration and referring to dated editions, (b) by reference to such works as McKerrow's *Printers' and Publishers' Devices*.

BINDING AND NOTES OF OWNERSHIP.

These may assist in dating. Manuscript additions to the text may be those of a famous owner or the author.

Thus by a bibliographical examination (when considered in relation to other copies perhaps) it should be possible to discover for a particular book, when it was printed and by whom, what edition it is and the relation between the text of the particular copy to the author's manuscript, and whether it is a perfect copy (that is, its relation to an "ideal copy").

Q.8. *The purchase of expensive general encyclopaedias in English for medium-sized general libraries or for special libraries raise a difficult problem in book selection. Discuss the main factors which must be taken into account in making decisions in this field.*

For the medium-sized general library or the special library, the chief problem in the selection of a general expensive encyclopaedia in English is a question of cost. (That statement is not quite the truism it would appear to be on first sight). A medium-sized general library will need some encyclopaedia in English. The questions are (a) How much can be afforded? and (b) What returns, i.e., how much use can be expected from the encyclopaedia chosen, for the money spent. Obviously the library will expect the optimum value for its expenditure. A special library may need an encyclopaedia. Here the question is: Will the expense of purchasing the work be justified in the use made of it and the shelf-space taken up? A lot depends upon the character of the library and its situation.

A library in a very specialised field may have very few calls on the general information to be found in an encyclopaedia, but a newspaper library will need it as much as a general library. A medical library may, for example, get requests for background information, for historical purposes. In all special libraries there may be need for an encyclopaedia for elucidating marginal points, that is for information falling just out of the scope of the special library. A further factor, the situation of the special library, is very important. If the library is near either a general library or another special library, then the question is much simpler. In the first case, the special library may decide to rely on the general library; in the second, one special library may decide to buy (say) *Chambers's* and the other *Britannica*. If both special libraries are isolated from general libraries and they receive many general enquiries, the expense may be justified—unless they are already on the Telex Service!

What are the uses of an encyclopaedia such as *Britannica*? It serves a very useful function in providing introductory accounts to many subjects. These can be useful if the librarian tackling an enquiry is not very well informed on the subject. It may give him the answer to the enquiry or give him clues to where the answer will be found. Then an encyclopaedia provides useful short accounts on many subjects where the enquirer does not require more detailed information. Against this there are many times when the information given is too sketchy to be of use, especially when looking for British information in an American encyclopaedia (and that includes *Britannica*). However, there is usually much information not traceable elsewhere. Biographical articles in a general encyclopaedia are usually quite good. On the other hand, the wide range of knowledge covered means that scientific and technical information given is usually insufficient, even in a general library. The information given may be out of date, depending on the state of revision of the encyclopaedia being used. But it is in the bibliographies, when they are up to date, that an encyclopaedia proves its usefulness. One of the books listed, if it is obtainable, may give the complete answer to an enquiry.

Much depends in a general library on the extent and quality of the stock of the reference library. The poorer the stock the more need there will be for a good encyclopaedia. Yet even the best libraries will have their encyclopaedias in constant use because of the frequently recondite information required and only to be found therein. (I know of a university library which has three *Britannica's* and two *Chambers's*—and they are not sufficient for the use made of them!)

Should a British or an American encyclopaedia be chosen? A British library is going to need most of all "home" information. The post-war editions of *Chambers's* give natural prominence to this information and I do not think there is much doubt that *Chambers's* is the best first encyclopaedia for a general library. Besides it is much cheaper than *Britannica*.

If it is a second encyclopaedia which is called for, then there is practically no question that *Britannica* will be the choice, although *Collier's* would be a useful alternative (except the bibliographies are all in one volume). If the 1950, or especially the 1956 edition of *Chambers's* has been bought, then the very latest edition of *Britannica* need not be provided. Many articles are the same in the 14th edition and the 11th and earlier editions have their uses. It is quite easy to cover technical and scientific information at encyclopaedia standard from other sources. There are many good introductions to nuclear physics, electronics, digital computers and so on to be found in the reasonably good lending stock.

The question may be whether to go to the expense of purchasing a new edition of an encyclopaedia already in stock, e.g., the 1956 *Chambers's* or the latest London printing of *Britannica*. Here a very careful assessment of the new information given will be required. A careful comparison will have to be made with the earlier edition. Is the new information available easily and conveniently elsewhere, e.g., the 1951 Census figures given in the 1956 *Chambers's*? Just how much of the encyclopaedia has been revised and how much taken over, unrevised, from the earlier edition? If the *Britannica Book of the Year* or the *Chambers's Encyclopaedia* is taken, is the purchase of a later edition justified? These year-books often contain information which will not be incorporated in the

encyclopaedia.

Only the larger libraries are likely to be able to afford other English language encyclopaedias such as the American. They do not really enter into the discussion of the provision of encyclopaedia in medium and special libraries. All reference books are potentially useful but there are unfortunately limits to shelf space available.

(N.B.—Even at Final level it is necessary sometimes to remind candidates to read the questions carefully, to answer all the parts and to discuss when a discussion is asked for).

FINAL PART 4 (d). HISTORICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

PAPER I.

On the whole a very fair paper, based solidly on the syllabus and lacking those questions on trivialities and obscurities which terrify candidates and infuriate tutors. Those who worked conscientiously through the syllabus should have coped very well.

Q.4, however, merits some very serious criticism. Candidates are asked to write on the contributions to the development of paper-making of: John Tate the Younger; John Baskerville; Denis Robert. Why John Tate *the Younger*? As far as bibliography students are concerned there was only one John Tate, and I doubt if many know that he was named after his father. How many, I wonder, have read the lines in *De proprietatibus rerum*, 1496 [?]:

“ And John Tate the yonger Ioye mote he broke
Whiche late hathe in Englonde do make this paper thynne
That now in our englyssh this boke is prynted Inne ”

Surely it is necessary to identify father and son only when they are both met with in the same field of study. One does not like to make too much of this, but the candidate with little confidence may well have wondered if there was another John Tate of whom he had not heard. In any case, what contribution did John Tate make to the development of paper-making? He was the first English paper-maker of whom we have any record, but does this constitute a contribution to the development of the art?

Still on Q.4 and passing over Baskerville, we come to the shadowy figure of Denis Robert. Many candidates must have wondered who he was. Nor will a check in the text-books bring him to light, unless the first edition of Esdaile is checked. There will be found a Denis Nicolas Robert credited with the invention of the paper-making machine. In the third edition, revised by Mr. Stokes, we find the name changed to Nicolas Louis Robert—a name known to every Registration student as that of the inventor of the paper-making machine.

In short this was a very simple question on which the reasonably prepared candidate could have managed a very sound pass. I suspect that some candidates left it alone because of uncertainty—uncertainty entirely the fault of the examiner, and quite unpardonable.

Q.5 *What were the chief enactments affecting the Freedom of the Press up to 1700?*

A straightforward question on an important subject which no candidate should have neglected to study.

Nowadays, “Freedom of the Press” means to us the right to print what we wish. However, it means more than that, as past enactments curtailing it have demonstrated. It means the freedom to print where, when and what we wish.

The relevant enactments required by the examiners are the *Star Chamber Decrees* of 1586 and 1637, and the *Licensing Act*, 1662.

The *Star Chamber Decree* of 1586 confined printing to London and the two universities. Thus printing in the provinces ceased or became clandestine. The Decree also stated that the number of presses was to be reduced to a number deemed sufficient by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, and all books were to be licensed. With one stroke, therefore, the government

attempted to confine printing to a small area, control the number of printers and control what those printers produced. The Decree did not succeed in any of these aims as clandestine presses, prosecution of printers and the *Stationers' Company Order* of 1615 bear witness. The latter stipulated that only twenty-two printers should practice in London.

The rigorous hounding of offending printers during the reign of Charles I culminated in the *Star Chamber Decree* of 1637. Again, this Decree was an attempt at complete control and would not have been necessary if the Decree of 1586 had been successful. The new measure confirmed existing ordinances and fixed the number of printers at twenty-three, including the King's printer and the printers at the universities. All books were to be licensed by the appropriate authority. In the case of law books this was the Lord Chief Justice; history books the principal Secretaries of State; books on heraldry the Earl Marshal; and all other books the Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop of London, or Chancellors or Vice-Chancellors of the universities. Books had to be entered in the Stationers' Register and bear the names of the printer, author and publisher. The final clause is interesting in another connection—it ordered the sending of a copy of every book to the University of Oxford. Drastic as the Decree was, it soon lost its effect and became a dead letter when the Star Chamber was abolished in 1641. However, much of it was imposed again by Parliament by an Ordinance of 1643—the measure which called forth Milton's *Areopagitica*.

After the Restoration came the allegations of Sir Roger L'Estrange that the Stationers' Company was not carrying out its duties of control satisfactorily. The result was the *Licensing Act*, which was very largely a re-enactment of the *Star Chamber Decree* of 1637. The number of printers was reduced to twenty (L'Estrange found they had increased to sixty), and the other clauses were reinforced. The Act was a crushing blow to the Stationers' Company, whose duty and privilege of searching for unlicensed books was withdrawn. The following year L'Estrange was appointed to the office of "Surveyor of the Imprimery and Printing Presses." He enforced the Act with greater zeal than had been the case under previous measures, and very great ill-feeling was caused until it was allowed to lapse three years later. After twenty years it was renewed by James II in 1685, and it finally lapsed in 1695. During its revival the Act was not very strictly enforced, as is clear from the number of presses throughout the country during the latter part of the century.

The final expiry of the Licensing Act was the end of attempted State control. From then on printing was permissible in the provinces and censorship was at an end. The measures to control the press were never really successful.

PAPER 2.

Also a not unreasonable paper, solidly based on the syllabus.

In this paper also Q.4 has a father and son problem. Candidates are asked to write a short account of three or four given names. The first of these is Robert Estienne. But which Robert Estienne? Robert I or Robert II? Of course the examiner means the elder, the only Robert Estienne of whom most candidates will know anything. Though the examiner seems inconsistent in his treatment of families, he has, in this case, saved some candidates from uncertainty! So what the candidate loses on the roundabouts he gains upon the swings!

Q.3. *What changes took place in the relationship of English and continental printing in the 18th century.*

An interesting question on an interesting period.

Before one can recognise changes one must know the relationship of English and continental printing before the 18th century. Very briefly, English printing was very much the poor relation. Influence was all in one direction, the Continent leading and England lagging behind.

Before the 18th century the quality of English printing was not to be compared with that of the Continent. Of course, there were exceptions, but gener-

ally English type and typography were undistinguished, press-work poor and paper indifferent.

The changes which took place in the 18th century were: a vast improvement in the standard of English printing and new independence of the Continent, also, English influence was felt on the Continent and England accomplished a certain amount of original technical development.

At the beginning of the 18th century England was very dependent on the supply of Dutch types, and it has been claimed that all the best and most important books were printed with Dutch type. England lacked a type-founder of distinction until Caslon began work. Caslon is not remembered for originality or for influence on foreign type-designers, but for the fact that he was our first really competent type-founder. He put an end to England's dependence on foreign types. Throughout his life, Caslon ignored the new developments in type design introduced by the designers on the Continent. He was to that extent independent, but on the other hand he took as his model the best Dutch types of the century before. Caslon's types were so widely accepted in this country that during his lifetime he had no serious competitor. He established good type founding in England and later in the century there were other competent men such as Thorne, J. and E. Fry, Martin, etc.

The Caslon types made possible an improvement of English printing, and because of them, English printing acquired a greater degree of freedom. Yet, until 1750, England was still the poor relation, still behind her continental neighbours in typographical achievement and enterprise. Then came Baskerville, who achieved much and was certainly not lacking in enterprise. Before Baskerville, conscious fine printing was unknown in England, and he was the first English printer to earn and deserve a continental reputation. For the first time the relationship was reversed and continental printing was influenced by an English printer. Baskerville was our second great type designer and our first book designer of genius. It was, in fact, Baskerville's style of book production, not his type design, which influenced the distinguished continental printers—they copied his spaced capitals and leaded pages. Together with Fournier, Baskerville was the inspiration of Bodoni.

Baskerville was the first English type designer to produce a design with modern face tendencies, yet even in England, modern face came from the French, and not as a development of Baskerville.

It was not usual for England to lead in the field of technical development, but here again Baskerville had an important contribution to make. His "wove" paper was copied on the Continent. Another example of technical development in England was the contribution towards the development of a satisfactory method of producing stereotype plates. William Ged made abortive attempts to develop stereotype in 1727, but the really important development was by Foulis and Tilloch (who were granted a patent in 1784), and later by Stanhope, whose plaster process was perfected in 1802. Perhaps we have no real claim here as Ged, Foulis and Tilloch were Scotsmen.

To think of 18th century book illustration is to think of the beautiful engraved illustrations of French books of the period. However, in the late 18th century England took the lead in the revival of the wood block, which for so long had been eclipsed by the engraving on copper. Using the white-line technique of wood engraving, Thomas Bewick produced work of a delicacy and natural charm never before produced on wood.

In the work of the late 18th century printers, particularly Bulmer and Bensiey, English printing reached new heights. There began, as Sir Frances Meynell has said, "a half-century of brilliance, during which England set the fashion for the Continent." This was indeed a changed relationship.

* * *

It is hoped to include in the next issue of the Assistant Librarian an article on the new Copyright Act which has had to be omitted from this supplement because of lack of space.

Birmingham and the Assistant Librarian

Our July issue roused strong feelings—so much so that it is impossible to print all the letters received without devoting the whole of this issue to the one subject. We have decided not to print most of the letters in our favour and are giving most of the space available to shortened versions of those expressing opposing views. We apologise for the cuts and omissions and hope that the result fairly expresses some of your opinions.

Willats Waxes Wroth

In the July issue, under the caption, "Birmingham Blues," after suggesting that all who think differently from the Editor, Henry Garnett, Miss M. Cook and their supporters are nonentities who know and respect nothing but mediocrity, it is suggested that "Smith and Liberty" are synonymous.

We are then told that Birmingham should apologise to the Editor, and it is inferred that the City Librarian of Birmingham is hammy at public relations, insulting to the "Browning Version," and lacking in humour because he has dared to indulge in a satirical hint at his opponents and critics. To say the least, this shows lack of respect to the Chief Officer of a large and important library system.

No one minds INFORMED criticism, but this malevolent "hit and run" nonsense is unworthy of a tabloid daily's hack columnist.

E. A. WILLATS, *Islington Public Libraries.*

Editor's comment: (1) *Mr. Willats seems to be an apt pupil of the tabloid journalism he affects to despise.*

(2) *His reverence for High Authority reminds us of Neville Chamberlain, who used to lecture the national newspaper editors on the necessity of being polite to Hitler.*

Miss Walker's Disgust

As many aspects of the *Assistant Librarian* disgust me with homely regularity, the appearance of the Garnett letter did not arouse any undue astonishment. That it was not worth paper space in any professional journal was no reason for disqualifying it from blazing publicity in ours; one has become hardened to this. I believe that the editor was following his favourite star which leads him to print anything however crude, badly written, facile and tasteless if it will stir up a little dirt; drag in a few letters, stimulate, however artificially, some controversy. I use the word "tasteless" deliberately and suggest that the editor could perhaps consult some good dictionary for in his use of "taste," however respectable the political columnist from whom he quotes, he shows the same incapacity for distinguishing between a moral and aesthetic issue that I have noticed many times before. If something is in bad taste it offends the aesthetic faculty principally and there is nothing mediocre about this offence though the editor has cause enough to play it down.

I would respect him far more if he had admitted in some way that he saw in the Garnett letter a way of filling the *Assistant* for months

ahead; he should feel very pleased with himself that we have, so ingloriously led by Birmingham, risen to the bait. But like a fox-hunter who will admit no pleasure in the chase, but hunts only to kill vermin, our Hon. Editor has to try to disguise his real motive in a mass of sentimental false righteousness. We are used to being considered half-witted, but he has overplayed his hand a little in imagining we were all born yesterday into the bargain.

BRENDA WALKER, *Manchester Reference Library.*

Back to Pre-War

Recent issues of the *Assistant Librarian* suggest that it is suffering from a deplorable lack of editorial policy and sense of purpose. You complain (quite rightly) of apathy among members and yet you fail to take full advantage of the opportunity offered you. If you produced a stimulating journal—topical, authoritative and, above all, constructive—it would be possible to arouse interest and enthusiasm and create a feeling of common purpose among members. This constructive attitude is missing and, as a result, any potential value or influence you may have is being lost. Members can have no respect for the *Assistant* as it now appears. Recent issues contain nothing likely to whip up enthusiasm and interest among the apathetic and no active member can be satisfied with your futile but desperate attempts to make yourself “interesting” and accomplish “an editorial performance comparable to the climbing of Everest.” Where then is your policy and purpose?

You might care to bear in mind that tutors still refer students to pre-war issues of the *Library Assistant*, where they find valuable features such as “Students’ Problems.” One wonders how many students in the year 1975 will be using current issues of the *Assistant Librarian* as a source of useful material, other than as a practical example of how not to run a professional periodical.

JOHN BUTCHER, *Wednesbury Public Library.*

Editor’s comment: We feel that it would be a pity if we gave the impression that professional education alone makes the “complete librarian.” Mr. Butcher is, however, incorrect to imply that no attention is paid to it—see for example the Examination Supplement appearing in this issue, which takes up considerably more space than the pre-war “Students’ Problems.” We would also draw attention to the A.A.L.’s pamphlet guides to the various examinations which partly offset the need for some types of advice given previously in the “Assistant.”

A.A.L. CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

FULL LENGTH COURSES.

Applications for F.P.E., Registration, and Final courses beginning November, 1957, must be completed and returned by 30th September. Full particulars of the courses offered are given in the current edition of the *Students’ Handbook* (L.A. 4s. post free).

FORMS, FEES AND ENQUIRIES.

Forms may be obtained from the A.A.L. Hon. Education and Sales Officer, Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A., 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21, who will be pleased to answer any enquiries concerning the courses. Stamped addressed envelopes for replies would be appreciated. The fee for each course is £2 10s. plus 10s. extra to students in Africa, America, Asia and Australia.

The Projection of Missiles in Vitreous Structures

It did not need a man of letters of the eminence of Mr. Henry Garnett to reveal the grisly spectres which lurk in the more-publicised libraries.

For example, on Monday, 1st July, I received a request from the Westminster Public Library for a volume of Molloy's *Automobile Repair*, with the usual note "Westminster copy temporarily missing," whatever that phrase may mean. As our set of the work is in steady use in our Reference Library, I instructed our Reference Librarian to enquire of Westminster whether a fortnight's loan would be adequate. In my presence she phoned Westminster at 11 a.m., and this intriguing conversation took place:—

Greenwich: "L.U.C. assistant, please."

Westminster: "Who?"

Greenwich: "The assistant dealing with London Union Catalogue enquiries."

Westminster: "Oh! I see." Pause. "Well . . . er . . . um . . . It's rather difficult just now. You see they are all at tea. Will you phone later?"

Greenwich: "Will you give this message to the L.U.C. assistant, and ask him to phone back? (Text of message)."

Westminster: "Oh . . . er . . . yes. Alright then."

That was sixteen days ago. The offer to lend is still open; the reply is still awaited.

What happens in Birmingham or Westminster is no concern of mine. My only purpose in writing this letter is to see what happens to it.

DAVID LEGGATT, *Chief Librarian, Greenwich.*

Editor's comment: (1) Surely, what goes on in Birmingham or Westminster, or in any other library IS the concern of every librarian who is interested in his profession as a whole. Any other attitude indicates a bad case of parochialism.

(2) How did Mr. Leggatt know what the Westminster assistant was saying? Was he tapping the telephones?

Too Much Correspondence?

Some time ago we were assured that the *Assistant Librarian* had taken a turn for the better. It was to become a lively, entertaining journal, etc.

What has happened to it? It has become a verbal battle-ground consisting almost solely of letters to the editor. Whilst agreeing that the opinions of the readers should find a place in any good journal, I think that in this case the theory has been taken to extremes. Fourteen pages of letters out of a total of sixteen pages might lead one to think that unless the various correspondents had contributed we would not have an issue at all.

Let us read our colleagues' views in our magazine by all means, but please let us have a magazine with letters and not a collection of letters prefaced by an editorial and tied up by the Council Notes.

M. HUGHES, *Bradford Public Library.*

I read your comments re the Birmingham Reference Library case with interest, but I am afraid that I strongly disagree with what you say. In the first place, I feel that you are more than a little smug. Put yourself in the position of the unfortunates at Birmingham, and imagine how *you* would like it, if someone came snooping round your library in order to write a ribald letter to the *Assistant Librarian*.

Secondly, the original article written by Henry Garnett would have been an amusing and witty piece, if applied to libraries in general. But, because the author applied it to a specific library, which he named, the piece instantly became a personal attack on the staff of that establishment.

DEREK J. WAY, *Public Library, West Bromwich.*

The Daily Mirror and the Assistant Librarian

R. Lloyd and R. M. Lyle may see things a little clearer if they think of the L.A.R. as I do: as *The Times* of Librarianship, with the *Assistant Librarian* as the *Daily Mirror*. We all file *The Times* and buy its index, as librarians, because although much of it is dull, prosaic and sometimes not topical, it is always authoritative and may safely be relied on and referred to at a later date, if need be. The *Daily Mirror* on the other hand, is always enjoyable, provocative and very entertaining, except I guess to Messrs. Woods and Willats, who must be very serious types. Most people know that you can wrap the fish in it the next day and be no worse off.

R. L. PEARCE, *Folkestone Public Library.*

So the *Assistant Librarian* has been called the *Daily Mirror* of librarianship. Perhaps your correspondents are right, because it certainly hasn't the measured dignity of some other journals. However, what is important is that it is *read*, and written to! There must be a good many editors of journals of librarianship who wish they could say the same of their publications—I know that I do.

ALAN MORLEY, *Hon. Editor, "Kent News Letter."*

Ginger for the "Record"

It would seem that Librarianship is a curiously divided profession. In the July issue of this journal one finds a sense of proportion sadly lacking. Librarians are apparently infallible creatures. They have all the virtues but none of the vices. The *Assistant Librarian* prints "murderous misrepresentation masquerading as criticism" and the *Record* lies stagnant. I can only suggest a solution to the problems of editorship; this is that the respective editors of these two journals should change places for a fixed period of time. The ginger will then go where it is needed most and the good taste may exercise its steadying influence in the appropriate direction.

S. J. PAGET, *Public Library, Chelmsford.*

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Some Other Correspondence

Examination Conditions

I would like to compliment all those concerned, on the organisation of the sittings of this years examinations at Chaucer House.

What could be more delightful, for example, than the urbanely whispered conversations with which the invigilators diverted the examinees? And those charming period desks from the university, how soaked they were in academic tradition, how inspiringly they swayed from side to side as one tried to write on them, with what feline malice did they challenge one to sit comfortably at them! Then we had the sounds from the busy world outside, the roar of cars and lorries being repaired, hammering, workmen happily shouting, whistling and singing at their tasks. No stuffily learned silence here to remind us of our libraries! How kind it is of the authorities to organise the examinations so informally, thus driving away all our nervousness, as well as our slim chances of passing! •

JOHN A. CUNLIFFE.

Cheers for Chandler

May I offer the following as a comment on the article *Parsifal of the Pulpis*, by Mr. Gerard:—

O Literature, we hail Thee, Finest Art.
From Thou each one of us his living gains,
And Novel, Thou art nearest to our heart
Since now, with sage's care and studious pains
A neophyte of Leavis comes to chart
Those higher Realms of Bliss where CHANDLER reigns.

D. J. SIMPSON, *Branch Librarian, Nottingham.*

OMAN—Art of War in the Middle Ages

This is not out of print. A revision by J. H. Beeler is published by the Cornell University Press, at 24/-, and handled by the O.U.P. in this country.

We ordered it and were told that it was unobtainable, but I am assured that there are actual copies.

J. G. O'LEARY, *Dagenham Public Libraries.*

Phillips on Finance

May I be permitted to refer to Mr. Moon's light-hearted comments on the 1957 Annual General Meeting of the A.A.L. in the last issue.

It was easy at the meeting to excuse Mr. Davinson's naïveté and lack of experience in financial matters, but I cannot reasonably be expected to overlook the Honorary Secretary's published misinterpretation of my regrettably unsuccessful efforts to elicit a true picture of the Association's financial position. It was only when the Platform provided a warning note about the meagre nature of the "Balance in hand" in the General Account Section of the Annual Statement of Income and Expenditure that I was concerned to point out that a full Balance Sheet of the assets of the Association was not being presented.

As an old member of the A.A.L. Council, Mr. Moon well understands (as will Mr. Davinson when he emerges from his fledgling status), that I quite deliberately refuse to "understand" a financial policy, which progressively invests every spare penny in building up valuable stocks of text-books—each calculated to result in eventual and sometimes immediate profit—and, *at the same time*, loudly bemoans the fact that little hard cash is left in the kitty.

Members of the Association who may be worried at the small actual balance in the Account should take heart from the fact that, only a few years ago, a seemingly well-estimated deficit was turned almost overnight into a most handsome credit by the unexpectedly high sales of certain of the Association's publications.

W. HOWARD PHILLIPS, *Deputy Librarian, Sheffield.*

Antiquarian Rubbish

In her interesting article on *Subject Departments and the Assistant* last month, Miss E. K. Wilson makes two points which need further amplification.

She passes over the true nature of a local collection and her method could lead to a collection overburdened with antiquarian rubbish. It is an error commonly made and stemming from a failure to ask two questions before considering methods: what should be collected, and (before that question can be answered) what is the purpose of a local collection. The purpose is to collect, arrange and preserve material illustrative of past and present local society for the use of future scholars and researchers. Anyone with any acquaintance with historical research will now see the answer to the second question. The material to be collected is of two kinds: source material and secondary material. The former is manuscript or printed contemporary evidence (administrative and legal records; ecclesiastical and parochial records; manorial records; private letters, memoranda, deeds and accounts; newspapers—complete, handbills, pamphlets; maps, prints, plans, sketches and photographs; directories, year-books, handbooks, time-tables and so forth), the latter, what previous reputable researchers have written as their considered interpretation of these items of evidence. In such a scheme, cuttings from national newspapers have little place. If such items are "news" they will generally be traceable through *The Times Index*, which will be sufficient for researchers, or noted in far greater detail in the local Press: if the items are "features" in the more popular national Press, they will be of ephemeral value, though an index could be made of them. But the local newspapers should on no account be cut up and mounted, but stored complete and unmulitlated, for even the advertisements are of historical importance. An index to the local newspapers would be invaluable. Having done research on local newspapers, I can assure you of their great value if kept complete.

The second point is to question the necessity, which Miss Wilson implies, of closely classifying newspaper cuttings. She mentions *The Times*. If she were to visit *The Times Library* where the *Index* is compiled, she would see that cuttings are not classified at all, but are kept alphabetically by subject. The Librarian will enthusiastically point out that, whatever the pundits may, say, the system works excellently.

P. S. MORRISH, Assistant, Greenwich Public Library.

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Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

EDITOR: W. G. SMITH.

Westminster Public Libraries, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.

VOL 50. NO. 10.

OCTOBER, 1957

Talking Points

The New Gradings

Our first reaction on reading the detailed statements accompanying the new grading scheme for local government officers was that public librarians had once again been left out in the cold. Engineers, surveyors, finance staffs and others whose position is governed by national awards, had had those awards adjusted under the new scheme, whereas the national award for librarians (usually known as the APT II award) was left for further negotiation at a later stage. The APT II award had automatically become the APT I (new style) award which, of course, is nonsensical.

A round of discussions and some telephone calls to the Library Association officers, however, persuaded us that our first view may have been over-pessimistic. The national awards for other professions have, it is true, been given a place in the new scheme, but that place is relatively unchanged compared with their previous scheme. With regard to librarians, however, the employers have recognised that the present position is anomalous and have promised early negotiations. This would seem to imply that they will agree to some higher status for librarians. We understand that the Library Association is pressing for a national award of APT II (new style), to apply, as previously, to Chartered Branch Librarians in charge of a staff of three people, but there is some suggestion that a compromise will be reached on some special scale. Such a special scale is unlikely to be better than the new APT II and we hope that Nalگو and the L.A. will not compromise.

Our colleagues in other departments are often completely unaware of the responsibilities of librarians who are providing a specialised form of service to the public and often have to do so entirely on their own initiative without direct supervision from their headquarters department or central library which may be many miles away. Can it fairly be claimed that *any* Branch Librarian, whether or not he has a staff of three, should receive less than the new Grade II?

What does disturb us is the lack of pressure at local level for any action on behalf of librarians. How many librarians have insisted that their Nalگو representatives find out what is happening about their national award? How many have insisted that their Branch committees consider the question of extra pay for the awkward hours worked by library staffs? How many whose gradings are unsatisfactory have appealed against them and, if necessary, taken the matter to arbitration? How many have found difficulty in recruiting sufficient representatives for the libraries department on Nalگو committees? How many Branch secretaries are librarians? We know all the difficulties about fitting in meetings with evening duties

but, given the will, it can be done—and must be done if ever Nalگو is to pay real attention to our claims.

It is no good relying entirely on the L.A. That body does more on our behalf in this matter than we realise (although we admit that this has often been the Association's fault for not keeping members fully informed), but it must have more backing from individual members if real success is to be achieved in its negotiations with Nalگو. This policy has its risks. Assistants agitating for better conditions are not always popular with Chief Librarians (we know of one case where an assistant was promptly posted to a "punishment branch" when he took up with Nalگو the question of the number of evenings and Saturdays on duty), and there is liable to be friction with other departments. On the other hand we were talking recently to several Chiefs who were deploring the lack of activity in this respect by members of their staffs. Risks must be taken if we are to gain results, and the bolder we are the more likely are we to gain success.

Exchange is no Robbery

One of the most encouraging things that has happened for some time in the matter of staff training is the system of exchange of staffs between different library authorities initiated by Holborn Public Libraries. Holborn has agreed with Birmingham, Nottingham City, Derbyshire County and Bristol to exchange staff up to Grade APT II (old-style!) for a month at a time.

There have, of course, been previous schemes of exchanges of which the one organised by the A.A.L.'s Sussex Division is outstanding. But this is on a much grander scale and the variety of experience to be gained is far greater. Many London librarians, for example, would benefit from a spell in the large provincial reference libraries while many from the provinces would equally benefit from a working knowledge of London's co-operation schemes.

The occasion for these remarks is a letter we have received from Miss Josephine Saland, of Birmingham Public Libraries, one of the first to take part in these exchanges. "Of its success, from my point of view," she says, "let there be no doubt. If any authority has considered such a scheme but is wary of taking the plunge, my advice is to jump right in, and rest assured the effects of the splash will be a topic of conversation in more than one staff room for many a day. At Holborn I gained an entirely fresh outlook on librarianship, and I have returned to the Midlands rejuvenated in spirit, if not in body."

It says a great deal for the morale of the staff at Holborn that, from their comparatively small numbers, nine members have volunteered for these exchanges. The difficulty has been to find sufficient staff from the other libraries to make the trip to London. Mr. Swift, the Chief Librarian, and the Holborn Committee deserve special praise for their far-sighted attitude to staff training.

Typical of the hypocritical thinking about the Net Book Agreement is an article in the *Bookseller* of August 31st, by an "Overseas Librarian." Booksellers who allow more than 10 per cent discount to British libraries are called "disreputable," whereas those who allow any discount to overseas libraries—equally a breach of the Net Book Agreement—are called "courageous" and their action "wholeheartedly approved."

✓ Librarians and Copyright

In the last registration examination candidates were asked to discuss from the librarian's point of view the terms of the Copyright Act, 1956, regarding document copying. NEVILLE DAIN, Head of the Leeds Library School, provides the answer.

Before the operation of the *Copyright Act, 1956*, librarians who produced copies of protected items did so on the assumption either that their partial copies were not individually a "substantial part" of a work (*1911 Act, sect. 1 (2)*), or that as agents for a reader, who was allowed to copy with "fair dealing" for private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary, they were equally covered by the allowance for "fair dealing" (*ibid. sect. 2 (1)*). No such assumptions were clear interpretations of the 1911 Act, and some librarians have customarily consulted publishers as a precaution in spite of delay.

From the operation of the 1956 Act it is legal for librarians of non-profit making libraries to copy for readers under prescribed circumstances articles in periodicals and parts (not the whole) of published non-periodical literary, dramatic and musical works. A librarian of a similar library may copy the whole or part of a published work for a librarian of a library of the same class under prescribed conditions.

When copying articles or parts of books for readers, librarians must be satisfied that the copies will be used only for research or private study. Only one copy of the same item may be supplied to one person, and the full cost "including a contribution to the general expenses of the library" must be paid for the copies. If item is a periodical, a copy made for one person may be of only one article. If the item is a part of a book, copies shall be subject to any regulations of the Board of Trade which may limit copies to a "reasonable proportion of the work." When a non-periodical work is copied for a reader or another librarian the copy may only be made after consulting the owner of the copyright, unless the name and address of the latter are unknown and cannot be discovered by "reasonable enquiry."

Librarians for whom copies are made are required by the Copyright (Libraries) Regulations 1957 (although not specifically by the Act itself) to pay the cost attributable to production including a contribution to the library's general expenses. A second copy of the same work or part of a work shall not be supplied to a librarian unless the librarian making the copy is certain that the previous copy has been lost, destroyed or damaged. This also is a requirement of the Regulations quoted. One concession only is made under those Regulations in favour of librarians. Although the typographic arrangement may not be copied from a published edition for a reader without the permission of the copyright owner of the edition if known during 25 years after first publication, such a copy may be made for a librarian of an approved class without consulting the owner of the copyright, even if known or ascertainable. The copyright in a published edition should not be confused with the copyright of the literary or other work if it persists.

The conditions affecting the copying of published works are such that librarians may find it desirable, even if not required, to keep a register of copies supplied, noting extent, charges, purpose and names and addresses of readers. Due observation of the restrictions on the extent of copies for readers, and due levying of statutory charges could only be proved by the permanent maintenance of such a register if an author or publisher sued on those accounts. The statutory charges are so loosely defined that they can vary enormously. Perhaps library authorities will adopt different bases for costing the copies of needy students

and the copies of commercial and official users. There is already some indication that that procedure will be adopted. The full charges, including indirect ones, might be higher than the value of a copy for personal use, and such a charge might hinder the making of the best use of the library resources. It would, of course, be illegal to make charges which were proclaimed to be less than the full cost, and an element of profit might be included in the charges of non-personal readers to be offset against the charges of personal readers.

The limitation of a copy from a periodical to one article per person may be inconvenient, especially as it seems to be legal for a reader to return on subsequent occasions for other articles from the same periodical. "A copy" seems to mean a copy supplied on one occasion, and any other interpretation would be unreasonable although copying of several articles from a periodical during its current period might be viewed as having led to the loss of a sale and be accordingly actionable. The Act leaves that point inexplicit. In the case of non-periodicals, the onus of attempting to discover the owner of the copyright before proceeding lies on the librarian. "Reasonable enquiry" is left open to interpretation and it might be held to include advertising. At least it will not be safe in all cases for librarians to conclude that it does not. Advertising would cause delay and add to the reader's costs.

Unpublished works (original and copies of original works) which are kept in libraries or other institutes open to the public, may be copied by anyone (including the librarian) at a time more than fifty years after the author's death and more than a hundred years after the completion of the work. Such a work may be published. This provision may be a product of the experience of Mr. Lamb, who sat on the Copyright Committee. Such a collection as the Wentworth Woodhouse MSS in Sheffield Library may now reach a wider public than was allowable under the 1911 Act. It was doubtful if it was legal under that Act for librarians to expose such items for note-taking by students since the library was furthering the making of copies and was in fact contributing to a form of publication as anyone can present himself at a library to inspect and read unpublished works. Now it is clear that any person who deposits MSS accepts the position that they will be available for publication and copying without conditions in due course.

If unpublished works are bequeathed in a will, the Act provides that, in the absence of contrary indications in the will or a codicil to it, the copyright shall pass with the works. That provision enables libraries to copy or publish such works without waiting for the statutory periods applying generally to unpublished works deposited in libraries.

The provisions in the Act relating to the copying of documents are a reasonable compromise, although it is to be regretted that the making of a full charge for each copy for a reader is obligatory since it may hinder the full and proper use of library materials. Since no charge is made for consulting any works on the library premises, and since the lending of documents to ratepayers shall be free of cost, it is hardly in accordance with the spirit or even the law governing libraries, that a copy of a work, which may not be lent for some intrinsic reason such as rarity or fragility or even weight, must be paid for at the full cost to the library (including administrative charges). The use of copies of documents usually relates to either a more serious or necessary project even if not always a more worth-while one than the use of the majority of books which are freely lent without apparent damage to the author's or publisher's profits.

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rock the readers and see the issues roll!

By S. M. Jarvis, Aldershot Public Library

There is too much theory in our professional journals—too much airy-fairy speculation. So many of the pundits who are busily promoting the policy of our profession have dull libraries—plain dull.

Yet they could change this at no extra cost, if they would put down their penwipers—leave their offices and their jackets, roll up their sleeves and rock the stock a little.

Take an example—in a very small space a book stand was erected on which the books could lay flat, both sides. The stock of books on gardening was overhauled and as a result, four or five shelves of books on this subject were transferred bodily to the stand. From a local ironmongers implements were borrowed (acknowledgment duly made)—a rake, besom, hoe, barrow, watering can, hose pipe, trowel, fork and so on—all tastefully arranged round what was purely a one subject display—all the books lived near each other normally—yet issues were doubled—we rocked the readers—what you might call rock gardening!

This idea of something to go with the books is never followed up enough. When I say that two parachutes and a life-size model of a soldier with captured arms thrown in formed the basis of another exhibition, you can see that we shake our readers, make them look and make it worth while looking.

Another idea—one or two glass cases of British birds—borrowed from a museum—enlivened our natural history section and pushed up the issues.

In none of this display work are books brought from varying sections of the classification to be forced under an artificial heading—like mixed fruit salad with prunes predominating! Each subject issues more, simply because there are hundreds of people who want to use these books but whose attention is never drawn to them on the serried ranks of books or more books which to the bewildered reader constitutes the library. Don't tell me they should be guided—they are; don't tell me the readers are lazy—they aren't.

The hardest task of all is to see the library as the reader sees it—then start alterations—for you'll have to!

None of these display efforts need cost pounds. For a start—borrow all the props you can—and it's surprising what can be borrowed in the humblest vicinity. Secondly—poster paints make colour and bold colour—splashed on, will always succeed—by sheer surprise. Lettering—pen lettering—coloured paper—even letters cut out from other words—it isn't calligraphy but character that's required.

Pictures can be fashioned from cut-outs—gummed paper pieces—illustrations—collection—bas-relief—paper sculpture—newspapers—magazines—comics. There are one hundred and one sources—if you're interested enough.

And don't forget my favourite forté-mobiles—they are simple to make cheap and cost nothing to run—yet in their constant motion and bright contrasting colours they put zip in any display—and use no floor space either! What's more, they're news as display medium and that's where libraries should always be—infront—in the news.

So rock the chief and roll the mobiles!

YOUR Letters

CLOSE ON SATURDAYS

In reply to Mr. Thimbleby's effusion regarding the virility or otherwise of librarians and its effect upon recruitment, may I congratulate him on at least having the guts to spring to the defence of his more diffident colleagues instead of hiding coyly behind the barrier of respectability, pomposity, etc. of the "this is beneath us," brigade.

The situation, briefly, is this. There are many people working in libraries to-day who have no right to be there. Such people have no aptitude for the job in hand and do themselves a disservice in addition to fermenting discontent and over introspection among those who have some talent towards librarianship.

The presence of these niggers-in-the-woodpile may possibly be due in some measure to the lack of discernment on the part of interviewing committees, although the Chief Librarian is very often in attendance. More probably, however, the generally low standard of applications for junior library posts is the root cause. This low standard of entry is due to awkward hours and relatively poor prospects of promotion and salaries. A further reason is the lack of sufficient knowledge on the part of intending applicants as to what constitutes librarianship.

What is the solution? First of all, as previously stated, the closing down on Saturday afternoons at least of all libraries. Secondly an efficient public relations organisation which can really get across to the public at large, via TV., radio, etc., our *raison d'être*. After all we have a right to some return for our annual subscription to the Library Association in addition to a monthly periodical which, by all accounts, speeds unerringly in many cases into the waste paper basket buff coloured dog collar and all. As regards salaries, N.A.L.G.O. is doing its best, has secured several increases since the war, and only costs four-and-sixpence per mensem.

Finally, to hark back to Mr. Thimbleby. It is somewhat amusing to note the naive way in which he basks in the reflected glory of his mountaineering, sports car *confreres*. I would humbly suggest that he tries his hand himself. As a wise man once said, *mens sana in corpore sano*.

VINCENT FORSHAW, *Staffordshire County Libraries*.

Reading the Record

Mr. Lyle has missed the point about being "inveigled" into reading the *Record*; I and others depending on secondhand information were put off by complaints about its dullness and only began to read it on joining the L.A. for examination purposes, and to our surprise found that the *Record* was far more interesting than others would have us believe.

Nor does Mr. Lloyd's suggestion than many of the articles in the *Record* should be scattered among various sources seem helpful. How many people other than students would make the attempt to read ALL of these if half a dozen different journals had to be consulted? I doubt if serious students would read more than half, while the remaining people would only learn who had got a bigger and better job from *Liaison*. Present trends in say library administration, although important, are mainly of topical interest, and if buried in books in the L.A. headquarters, would soon be lost to most of those interested and would be out of date before publication. Furthermore much of the correspondence arising out of articles published in the *Record* would not be written and additional stimulating thoughts would be lost. Surely one of the merits of the *Record* is that librarianship in so many of its aspects is covered in one periodical.

KATHLEEN J. EGGLESTON, *Scottish School of Librarianship*.

The Net Book Agreement

Mr. Lovell is scathing, Mr. Corbett is much more reasonable, but even with his milder approach I beg to disagree. I am not convinced that public libraries *as a whole* (and that is how the Publishers Association considers them) are entitled to *any* discount. A considerable number of libraries, both public and special, cause their booksellers work out of all proportion to the profit resulting from the privilege of being on their licence.

How many librarians purchasing books even consider the bookseller?; they order by BNB numbers, by title with no publisher, leave out prices, provide inaccurate information unchecked in bibliographies or publishers' lists. They demand all books on approval, keep them for a month and then return a quantity to the bookseller after the sales demand has fallen off. They order dozens of pamphlets subject to no discount from all sorts of odd societies and organisations and then create if the bookseller attempts to recoup his postage, let alone charge anything for the work involved. Some librarians ask for a delivery note and then an invoice, some two copies of the invoice, some six, and other variations on this theme. On top of all that the booksellers' invoices are amended by the Borough Treasurer when corrections are due for various reasons without any notification and these only become apparent when *in three months'* time he receives his cash.

And anyway, surely the best way to select books is to see every book possible, not jackets, not BNB entries, not travellers, not lists, not reviews only, and this can be done by purchasing directly from the local booksellers. It is worth more than any discount to the library. Do not let us have a free for all where money is the only thing that counts; if the library book-vote is inadequate, that is our affair, not the booksellers'; it is up to us to get more, not to try to cut the booksellers' meagre margin. If the librarian is not on good terms with the local bookseller I would wager it is the former's fault nine times out of ten for demanding unreasonable "services" (labelling, etc.), which are part of *our* work, not that of private trade.

I would suggest also that all library courses include some account of the bookselling trade so that we cease in future to live in a little world of our own, despising the bookseller and his assistant (who probably know more about books than us anyway), and using him only to lessen our own labours.

L. C. Guy, St. Marylebone Public Library.

The editor has often, in the past, taken his stand on very shaky ground, and his attack on the Net Book Agreement, being entirely in character, seemed scarcely to merit reply. The support of two respected Chief Librarians, however, puts the matter in a different category. Can none of them see beyond their book-funds? What will be the use of all that lovely money when booksellers are reduced to penury, their stocks debased, their staffs, like ours, depleted and of diminished efficiency.

That the booksellers should not be driven to their knees is in the interests of librarians, both as buyers of books and as encouragers of reading. Mr. Corbett, for all his yearning, points to some relevant practical considerations; the Net Book Agreement, in as far as it applies to libraries, also deserves our support on grounds of principle.

A. C. Jones, Chiswick Public Library.

Calling All Tykes

All ex-members of the Yorkshire Division now retired or living in foreign parts are cordially invited to Leeds on the evening of Thursday, 7th November, 1957, where the Division will celebrate its first fifty years. Buffet supper will cost 7s. 6d. per head. Speakers will look forward as well as backwards.

Godfrey Thompson, Secretary.

A.A.L. PANEL OF TUTORS: FIRST PROFESSIONAL

EXAMINATION

Correspondence course tutors are required for the Spring, 1958, session. Will Fellows interested in the work, please write to the Hon. Education and Sales Officer, J. S. Davey, 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21, who will supply information concerning procedure and expenses payable.

We Love People

"Most of us who choose library work as a career do so because we love books."

"If we did not care for books, what else could we come for?"

"There is no substitute for books."

These three sentences arrested my reading of Miss Willson's Presidential address. Could I qualify them in this way.

I should like to think that many of us come to librarianship because we love books *and* we love people. Not that we "like talking to people," or that we can "mix." But wanting to help, caring about, feeling for people. Surely many of us don't have to "stop to think about it to know that the work we do is of great value to the individual and to the community." If that knowledge isn't our lifeblood and (as I think) a good part of our reason for being librarians, librarianship *is* in trouble.

I realise that by coming into librarianship we have deliberately chosen to use books as our means of fulfilling this concern for a person, for people, and I would not wish to cry down our love of books. *But our primary concern*, in common with many other professions, *is with people*. And this concern, I must add, as with other professions, does not necessarily involve giving people what they want.

The written word not only "possesses a very powerful magic"; it can also come to be unwarrantably mystical, particularly for librarians. Both the "love of books" and the "no substitute for books" mottoes tend to draw to books an undue importance and should be used with great caution.

B. M. Charlton, Lancashire County Libraries.

A.A.L. Benevolent Fund

The A.A.L. wishes to acknowledge with many thanks an anonymous donation of £10 to its Benevolent Fund.

Members are reminded that this fund exists to help in cases of financial hardship. Applications should be addressed to the local Divisional Secretary or to the A.A.L. Hon. Treasurer, Central Library, Eastbourne.

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Vehicular - or Van - Librarianship

Several members recently attacked Mrs. Joan Firth's views on mobile libraries.

Mrs. Firth replies:-

Perhaps you would kindly allow me space to clear up one or two misapprehensions. The most important of these is that R. M. Lyle accuses me of being too coy to mention the Authority for whom I work. This was omitted solely because my letter had not previously been seen by my County Librarian, and so to mention the name of my employer in a letter which contained my personal views only, would have been a breach of etiquette. I learned that at my finishing school.*

My chief has now seen the letter, and is perfectly willing for me to state that I work for the West Riding County Council. So Miss Lyle will see that her remark about our standard being lower than elsewhere is quite ridiculous. Even the rawest junior, from the most sketchy reading will not be unaware of the fame of Mr. B. Oliph Smith and the West Riding County Library in matters connected with vehicular libraries. The fact that we have so many applicants for our vacancies is of course due to the *high* standard here.

I am sorry to disappoint Miss Needham, but I left my finishing school more than twenty years ago. Since then life has been far too grim and far too earnest for me to indulge in "facile idealism"; but I am old-fashioned enough to believe that little things such as calling a mobile library a van, really do matter. Little things such as this, and calling one's driver by his Christian name, wearing slacks or plunging necklines, lead eventually to slack and slapdash methods in larger issues.

Finally, Miss Lyle's somewhat acid remark that she hopes my readers like being led on to better books. Now, I wonder why she assumes that when I said "better books," I meant stodgy, dull books? If I go into a shop I am grateful if the assistant draws my attention to a more worth-buying article than the one I have in my hand. Of course, when my old ladies want Ruby M. Ayres, I find them without question. But that is where those extra years which bring experience and discretion *do* count for something. I know which of my readers could be led on and which must be left alone.

JOAN FIRTH.

**Mrs. Firth's finishing school seems to have been unique. It is certainly not the general practice to submit correspondence to one's Chief Librarian before appending the name of one's library. (EDITOR).*

—and Miss Bannister lends a hand

I feel that some words of defence on behalf of the West Riding County Library Mobile staff—and their readers—are called for by the attack in the July issue.

I can assure you that West Riding farmers are not using "vehicular harvesters." It is conventional in this system to refer to our mobile and travelling libraries as vehicles rather than as vans. As far as I can see,

this is a matter of local preference and no reason for fiery argument. In actual fact, the use of the term is official rather than everyday—mobile staff have their own names for a vehicle and to borrowers, it is simply “the library,” as in the phrases, “The library comes on Tuesdays,” or “I thought I’d missed t’ library to-day.”

Most of us in the West Riding, especially those of us who have met mobile staff from other counties, are well aware of the fact that we operate our vehicles under exceptionally good conditions. The readers’ advisory service is practised in a most highly developed form because our schedules are not overcrowded and, apart from the occasional pre-holiday rush, readers can have as much attention as they require. We are fortunate—but surely this is a standard towards which other county authorities should aim rather than the record of books issued per hour, which seems to occupy many of them.

This controversy which has arisen over the subject of mobile librarianship seems to show only too clearly that much more information on the subject is required. Perhaps a national meeting of mobile librarians might usefully be convened—I’m sure the opinion expressed would be stimulating, even if no real blood were shed.

SHEILA G. BANNISTER, *West Riding County Library*.

Hares and Herring

The trouble with the *Assistant* nowadays is that it starts so many hares one wants to chase—not to mention red herrings.

The correspondence on Mobile Libraries has degenerated rapidly. Of course, “vehicular library” is rather arch, but then to talk of a “van service” seems to suggest the second-rate. Mr. Lyle is surely being unfair when he says, “if the supply of mobile librarians exceeds the demand obviously the standard set is considerably lower than elsewhere.” Of the two authorities written about, one employs librarian/drivers, the other librarians plus drivers who assist with the routine of issuing books. Is it not understandable that the second authority may have better success in attracting staff?

“The desire for more and more issues has led many county libraries to purchase, staff and stock large ‘mobile’ libraries which regularly convey thousands of books not only to the remoter hamlets of Yorkshire or Cumberland, but even to the bus-frequented villages of such crowded counties as Hertfordshire! . . . Meanwhile, the commercial circulating library system of the country has been seriously hit, while it seems likely that the public library system has been saddled with a host of readers whose desire for purely ‘entertainment’ literature would be much more properly catered for by tradesmen than by professional librarians.” (The book world to-day, edited by John Hampden, Allen and Unwin, 1957, pp. 185-6). Does the use of mobile libraries encourage this identification of public libraries solely with pastime reading? We need to promote the idea of libraries as working collections for purposive readers; the sort of reader whose need cannot be met by the first book that comes to hand, but who may require ten minutes of the librarian’s time in order to exploit fully the stock to his satisfaction. The time factor alone makes such service difficult to give from a mobile library. It is no answer to quote high non-fiction percentages, since we know how very much of this is itself pastime reading, and the amount of attention

and use of the stock required to deal with these requests is in no way reflected in issue figures. Nor does it do to dismiss the needs of readers who are working when the mobile library calls by saying, "this difficulty is not a serious one" (Mr. Nicholls, *June Assistant*). How many librarians would like to have their reading selected by someone else?

Might we not perhaps give a better service if we concentrated on branch libraries and a postal service? I assume that the reader would not be expected to pay postage on a service used to some purpose (i.e., not simply pastime reading) and that the out-of-town reader would not be restricted in his use of the town branch by our petty regulations of 14-day loans and only two or three tickets per reader. It might in cost-per-issue terms be more expensive, but I am thinking more of standards of service. What I do object to is a facile assumption that mobile libraries are the only answer to a librarian's prayer.

One other topic: I would have said that the standard of the *L.A.R.* was rising and had been for some time. If articles on Carnegie medal winners are "of no great moment so far as the library profession is especially concerned" (Mr. Lloyd, *July Assistant*), then I suggest there is something wrong with the profession. We must beware of trying to foist too much out of the *Record* into *Liaison*. Of its nature, and to ensure topicality, *Liaison* will have to operate on a restricted basis. If it is to be used in public relations (part of its object, I presume), it cannot be forced to include information about examination dates and passes, for example. Perhaps we need three periodicals: a "house" journal for official announcements, appointments, etc.; *Liaison* for topical news; and a quarterly for important articles; then we might have the "house" journal free as part of the annual subscription, and put both *Liaison* and the quarterly on a normal sales basis.

COLSTON M. HARTLEY, *Lancashire County Libraries.*

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A review of THE BOOK WORLD TODAY

In this symposium* public librarians can read how they are regarded by commercial librarians, booksellers, etc., but more than that they can get a picture of the book world as a whole, including the viewpoint of authors, their agents, reviewers, book clubs, the B.B.C. and different kinds of publisher and bookseller. L. R. McColvin, on Public, National and other libraries, points out that public libraries "do a great deal to promote wider reading and increase the purchase of books and could do more"; that no one will go to a bookshop unless he has already become a convinced book-user; that "though inter-library loans enable the minority who know what they want to obtain it . . . the public library does its 'educational' work through its actual 'shelf stock'." (Is *your* shelf stock as educational as you would like?)

Chief librarians writing their annual reports might like to know that the results of recent experiments carried out by the B.B.C. and the Library, Booksellers and Publishers Associations, showed that with the acquiring of television the fall off in reading was only small (figures are given), and there is reason to believe that "in so far as television continues to offer the ordinary man daily access to the treasures of literature, music and knowledge, and seeks to encourage him to inform his own discretion, he will probably read more and think more and do more for himself; but in so far as it feeds him with triviality and conditions him to believe that the best use of leisure is to laugh and forget, it may endanger not only his ability but his will to read or to strike out on his own in any way."

The alternative is the view of T.V. expressed by Basil Donne-Smith, writing for commercial libraries. He also attacks the "Issue-Mania" of public librarians, whom he thinks should guide rather than indulge public taste. I was surprised, in view of the hundreds of copies of a new novel that the Times Book Club is said to purchase ready for publication day that commercial libraries account for only 5.7 per cent of publishers' home turnover as against 7.5 per cent for public libraries. The booksellers who supply these get perhaps 25 per cent discount from the publishers; but in 1952 booksellers had to sell £10,000 worth of new books to make £45 net profit. Anthony Godwin, of Better Books, says

NOTICE OF ELECTION

Nominations are invited for the following Officers and Councillors of the Association for the year 1958:

Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Editor.

Nine nationally elected Councillors, three of whom must be under thirty years of age on 1st January, 1958.

A member under the age of thirty may stand for election as national councillor in either category, but if he/she wishes to stand as an "under-thirty" candidate this should be stated specifically, together with the age of the nominee as at 1st January, 1958.

Nominations must be made in writing by two or more members of the Association, countersigned by the nominee, and reach me not later than 15th October, 1957.

E. E. MOON, *Honorary Secretary*,
Central Library, Kensington High Street, London, W.8.

that "this goes a long way towards spreading the cost of providing a proper service to the public. I prefer not to think of what would happen to the present standard of bookselling if public libraries withdrew their support and bought all their books from the specialist 'library suppliers' who often have no shop at all," and for provincial booksellers, Alan B. Ward says that he has always found public library reference resources willingly offered, while "the knowledge that a librarian *may* buy a book decides me to stock many good, expensive and yet 'difficult' books which otherwise I should not have done."

P. D. GANN, *Gloucestershire County Library*.

*Edited by John Hampden, Allen and Unwin, 21s., 1957.

Personality plus . . .

By L. S. Francis, Reference Librarian, Aldershot

An enthusiastic Principal at Library School endeavoured to teach elementary principles of administration. Due to lack of time he was not able to deal with one vital aspect, that of Personnel Control. Since then I have been looking for a simple set of rules for guidance. To my surprise I discovered a nucleus in *The Sergeant-Major*,* by James Leasor, which is a biography of R.S.M. Brittain. Often the principles Brittain adhered to as an R.S.M. speak for themselves, but in some cases I have amplified them.

"Never did he lose his temper with them for almost unknowingly, he had learned the first lesson in the command of others, and in the most important of all: that first a man must be able to command himself" (p. 58).

"He is in charge of their discipline and tone, and he can never relax too much, or else he loses his control" (p. 139).

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"You must find fault when things go wrong, but never forget a pat on the back when they don't" (p. 141).

I do not think that the last three quotations are as contrary as they first appear; a man in control of himself can exercise a fair amount of tolerance when he has a thorough knowledge of the personalities of his juniors. One well-known member of our profession measures his tolerance thus, "Anybody can make a mistake; only a fool makes the same mistake twice; if he makes it a third time he is an absolute idiot."

"... he should try to treat everyone alike. So if you like someone who's serving here, don't let them know. And if there's someone you don't like, for whatever reason, don't let them know it either" (p. 139).

"The fact that he did what they had to do encouraged ... the rank and file ..." (p. 133). This is probably one of the most dangerous statements in his resumé, and I can well imagine some Chiefs going a little pale at the thought of writing tickets. Fortunately, not all Chiefs are like that (vide *Assistant Librarian*, April, 1957, p. 56). However, I have known seniors who were so out of touch with books, plus being reared in the "backroom boy" tradition, that they funk'd reader's advisory work.

Allied to this is the problem of identity with the group, but at the same time endeavouring to be a leader and consequently set apart from the group. The simplest analogy is that of parents and children. (Senior Assistants are not recommended to use the approach "let me be a father to you." It does not work, so I have been told). R.S.M. Brittain puts it thus: "The Serjeant-Major should never close his door" (p. 147). He believes that the senior should always be available to listen to any grievance or worry that the junior has, and give all the help possible to reach a solution.

Although I have quoted an R.S.M., I am not suggesting that all Senior Assistants should follow the sergeant-major tradition. But I do suggest that these principles are helpful.

*Harrap, 10s. 6d., 1955.

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Looking In On

“The Outsider”

Talking about Reading—8.

by John L. Broom

Few books in recent years have caused such a stir in scholarly circles as Mr. Colin Wilson's *The Outsider*. Most critics have been greatly impressed by the erudition and alleged profundity of thought displayed by the 24-year-old author. Mr. Wilson is undoubtedly an exceedingly well-read young man, and yet to me at least, it seems that *The Outsider* is precisely the kind of book which a brilliant student of his age might be expected to write; that is to say, it is witty, iconoclastic, full of the exaggerated dogmatism and sweeping generalisations of youth, and in its conclusions, fundamentally wrong-headed.

What are, according to Mr. Wilson, the fundamental characteristics of the typical “outsider”? Throughout his treatise Mr. Wilson offers varying and, as we shall see, inconsistent definitions. He is Keegan in *John Bull's Other Island*, who, unlike the crass, unthinking optimist Broadbent, does not feel basically “at home” in the world. He is “the man who is interested to know how he should live instead of merely taking life as it comes.” He is Tolstoy asking, “Is there any meaning in life that can overcome inevitable death?” The “insiders,” on the contrary, are the regular travellers on the 8.15 to the City, immersed in their newspapers, or gazing vaguely at the advertisements above the opposite seats. “Inscribe on the placard in place of the advertisement for corn plasters, Eliot's ‘We are the hollow men. We are the stuffed men, leaning together,’ and they would read it with the same mild interest with which they read the rhymed advertisements for razor blades, wondering what on earth the manufacturers will be up to next.”

Now, there is obviously nothing in all this to which the average thinking man could so far take exception. Indeed, interpreting the above definitions strictly, all are “outsiders” who apply their brains to a consideration of life and its purpose, and are not content to drift with the tide. Yet it becomes clear as the book proceeds that the genuine “outsider” as envisaged by Mr. Wilson must also have a mystical insight into realms beyond both the senses and the reason. Thus Wilson writes: “The visionary faculty is man's norm. Just as you could not count a man normal if he had a mouth but no eyes, so you cannot count him normal if he has a brain but no visionary faculty. Most men live from moment to moment with no foresight or hindsight. The dogma of original sin insists that man has lost his visionary faculty because he spends all his time thinking about practical things.” The *non-sequitur* here is glaring. It is obviously eminently possible to refrain from living merely from moment to moment, to think about “non-practical” things, and at the same time to entertain strong doubts regarding the existence of a “visionary faculty.” The proofs Mr. Wilson offers in this respect are singularly unconvincing. It is seen in operation, he maintains, in Van Gogh's “Cornfield,” and “Road with Cypresses,” in the last movement of the Hammerclavier Sonata, and in Blake's mystical poetry. And he quotes Blake's celebrated utterance, “If the doors of perception were cleansed everything will appear to man as it is, infinite.” Now, no person of culture, whether atheist or theist, of course, denies the supreme emotional experience of great art, but it is surely clear that all such masterpieces depend for their creation and appreciation on the very

material senses. Indeed, Blake himself emphasises this in the very passage Mr. Wilson quotes—the doors of perception are “cleansed,” not superseded. The fallacy in Mr. Wilson’s reasoning at this point rests on the familiar confusion (exhibited also in the writings of Messrs. Huxley and Heard) between an emotion and a perception. The appreciation of the highest art is a subjective emotional state and cannot, as Mr. Leonard Collier wrote in the *Flight from Conflict*, prove anything about the universe except the fact of its own existence. It is mere illogical word-spinning to say that some mysterious “out of this world” condition exists with which we are able to make contact when we read, listen to, or look at the productions of the great masters.

There can be no doubt that many of Mr. Wilson’s “outsiders” would have kept the psychiatrists of their various days and ages fully occupied. “Blake told Crabb Robinson,” says Mr. Wilson solemnly, “that he had seen the ghost of Julius Caesar on the previous evening and that he spent more time conversing with spirits than with ordinary human beings. This is either madness or a very strange order of sanity.” Most people would be inclined to accept the former alternative. Blake was unquestionably a poet of genius, but there are long passages in his “prophetic” books which are hardly the utterances of a wholly sane man in any reasonable meaning of that phrase. Few Freethinkers, moreover, will be disposed to disagree with Prof. H. J. Paton’s judgment of another of Mr. Wilson’s idols, Kierkegaard. “His (Kierkegaard’s) popularity to-day is a sign of the dangerous pass to which we have come—a mark of desperation and despair. We may pity his unhappy and diseased temperament but neurosis is a poor qualification for setting up as a religious guide.” (The Modern Predicament, p. 120). Or again, when Mr. Wilson writes of Swift’s view in the last book of *Gulliver’s Travels* that man is a lump of deformity and diseases. “This is not pathological loathing . . . It is the ordinary Outsider’s attitude to man. It is also the religious attitude,” we can only reply that if this is so the less we have of the Outsiders and the religious attitude the better. Finally, it would be a brave man who would swear to the over-riding sanity of such as Nietzsche, Gurdjieff and T. E. Hulme. In truth, with the single and striking exception of Shaw, all of Mr. Wilson’s “outsiders” suffer from the grave defect of having no sense of humour. The absence of this invaluable quality is always accompanied by a lack of proportion and by a distinct strain of fanaticism which all Mr. Wilson’s eulogies cannot conceal.

On numerous occasions, Mr. Wilson goes out of his way to attack the secular approach to life in the most extravagant and abusive terms. Thus, “The most irritating of the human lice is the humanist, with his

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puffed-up pride in Reason and his ignorance of his own silliness." Mr. Wilson, it will be noted, trusts to his own despised reason to try to establish his whole case. "Blake's particular bugbears were the rationalists and the natural religionists—Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau and the scientists Priestly and Newton (modern counterparts would be the Secular Society and thinkers like Dewey or Russell)". If it is not "puffed-up pride" on the part of both Blake and Mr. Wilson to sneer in this juvenile fashion at men of such stature as the above then words have no meaning. "The essence of religion does not deny knowledge and civilisation and doing good. It only denies their primacy. The attitude of Leigh Hunt's 'Abou Ben Adhem,' who admits he does not love God but tells the angel, 'Set me down as one that loves his fellow men,' is loathsome to it as sentimental sophistry'." Through this last quotation, Mr. Wilson reveals the religious approach in its true colours. Ethics, "doing good," is relegated to a position of secondary importance. Thus, elsewhere he writes: "Raskolnikov (in *Crime and Punishment*) does not fail because the solution is morally wrong. He fails because he is not strong enough to cease to be an Outsider." Raskolnikov's "solution," it will be remembered, is the brutal murder of an old woman. Again, Mr. Wilson quotes with approval the dialogue between Kirilov and Stavrogin in *The Devils*: "Everything's good." "What about the man who insults and rapes a little girl? Is that good, too?" "Yes, it is."

The Outsider's philosophy is thus clearly and frankly set out as one of religion without morals, and this, as we have seen, is borne out by the personal lives of many of Mr. Wilson's heroes (Dostoevsky and Kierkegaard being perhaps the most glaring examples). Mr. Wilson is said to be now engaged in writing a novel about Jack the Ripper, whom he regards as the perfect "outsider." This would certainly seem to be a

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logical development of his conclusions in the present work, but dare we suggest that the world might be a happier and healthier place with fewer Jack the Rippers, Raskolnikovs and so on, and more lovers of straightforward humanist values such as simple kindness and tolerance? "The new anti-humanist epoch," writes Mr. Wilson in a final rhetorical flourish, "will be the consequence of the rigorous questioning of such man as Blake, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, Shaw . . . Humanism is only another name for spiritual laziness or a vague half-creed adopted by men of science and logicians, whose heads are too occupied with the world of mathematics or physics to bother about religious categories." Let us hope profoundly that "the new anti-humanist epoch" will be strangled at birth, for there can be few more dangerous and pernicious influences than the immoral religious Outsider whom Mr. Colin Wilson holds up for admiration. *Reproduced by courtesy of the Editor of "Pharos," the Lancashire County Libraries Staff Guild Magazine.*



The A.A.L. Conference, 1957.

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Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians
(Section of the Library Association)

EDITOR: W. G. SMITH.

Westminster Public Libraries, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.
VOL. 50. NO. 11 NOVEMBER, 1957

Examiners and Tutors

"IT IS DIFFICULT," said Mr. E. F. Ferry in our recent Examination Supplement, "to find any valid reason for laying the blame for a distressingly low percentage (of passes) at the examiners' doors." In this issue Mr. Frank Atkinson has no difficulty whatever in finding valid reasons in at least one part of the examination while three more of our contributors question the judgment of the tutors. At the last A.A.L. Council, Mr. Ferry himself seemed to have joined the ranks of the dissenters when he associated himself with a protest about the low pass percentage in the First Professional Examination. As an experienced tutor he was puzzled at the failure of some of the best students. On looking back, however, we find that Mr. Ferry is not a newcomer to the critics of the examiners. In the Examination Supplement in September a year previously he said, "There is more ambiguity than one expects to see in carefully prepared papers. This is most unfair to students."

In fact, in spite of the detailed consideration which we are constantly assured each examination question receives, ambiguities, points outside the syllabus, and downright errors appear with alarming regularity. The resulting discontent which one hears continually expressed in libraries further lowers morale already suffering from the effects of uncompetitive salaries and awkward working hours; the result is that the examiners and assessors are contributing to the loss of good young people to the profession. We have always up to now resisted the demands of the library schools to hold their own examinations, but the L.A. will need to show very quickly that it can do the job properly if the tide of opinion is not to turn against it in the near future.

The situation with regard to tuition is also unsatisfactory since very few of the tutors have received any kind of training for the job of teaching (subject knowledge alone is certainly not enough). We asked a foreign student what he thought of the standard of tuition at the British Library School he attended last year. Anxious to be polite, he said that one tutor had only started that year and, therefore, was perhaps not quite used to it; another tutor had been there several years and, therefore, perhaps, had grown too used to it! With part-time tutors the position is worse. The work necessary to prepare lessons, mark papers and give advice is far more than any student is called upon to do, and the tutors sometimes reluctantly accept the job merely because no-one else is available. When they are employed, there is seldom any supervision; so long as no students complain to the head of the school, they are assumed to be competent.

One of the greatest faults in teaching is the attempt to do too much. The reading lists in every course we have seen, oral and correspondence, are out of all proportion to the real requirements of the examination. It is surprising how little of the formal text-book reading is really required. We found, for example, that the abridged schools edition of

The History of English Literature by Leguis was sufficient for the Registration Literature Examination, while for the finals in modern literature we used a little 8s. 6d. book by Professor Collins, *English Literature of the Twentieth Century* (University Tutorial Press, 2nd edition, 1954). Added to these of course was steady reading of a large number of literary and library periodicals. Awareness of current library and literary controversies is far more important than a mass of text-book knowledge both in our job and in our examinations. In his article in the September Examination Supplement, Mr. Ferry rightly stressed the importance of general knowledge, but there would be little time for the student to acquire any if he attempted to follow completely our formal courses of tuition. Only two weeks after the beginning of the current school-year, we met students from the North-Western Polytechnic School of Librarianship who were complaining that they could not keep pace with all the set reading.

One wonders if private study is not a better way of passing examinations for anyone not able to attend a full time course. It certainly produced better and quicker results in our case (with the sole exception of Registration Group A where the set practical work of a correspondence course was most valuable). The series of A.A.L. Guides to the Examinations proved a most useful aid (although even here we would suggest that the reading lists are too long).

One of the most fatuous statements we have seen is that sitting for an examination for which one is not fully prepared "is a waste of the examiners' time." No student is likely to shed tears over that, and those who are prepared to take a chance of passing should be complimented for their enterprise rather than condemned. There are several examinations (such as administration and assistance to readers) for which general knowledge, experience, and, once again, wide periodical reading are far more important than any other preparation.

(Editorial opinion does not necessarily reflect the view of the A.A.L. Council).

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ARE EXAMINERS COMPETENT ?

The query is posed by FRANK ATKINSON of Hampstead Public Libraries in this satire on our recent examination supplement.

A Candidate's Report on the Examiners and Assessors: Historical Bibliography, June 1957

It is apparent from the papers set for June, 1957, that the examiners and assessors in Historical Bibliography have learned nothing from their previous failures. It cannot be stressed too strongly that by selecting and concentrating on parts of the syllabus, they are courting disaster.

Of the 16 questions set, 3 were on bookbinding.

1 only was on book illustration.

No question dealt with copyright—

a very unbalanced frame for an equally gimcrack display.

FIRST PAPER.

Q.3.—*Compare Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester; the Rev. C. M. Cracherode; and Richard Heber, as collectors of books. What were the main changes in the book trade between the time of the first and the last?*

This question has little to commend it save the punctuation. The examiners have been congratulated elsewhere for avoiding questions on "trivialities and obscurities" (!). One cannot agree with this, but admittedly they have not produced anything so infinitesimally trivial or so completely obscure as their "Printing in Naples up to 1500" and "The Work of Hermann Zapf," of 1956. However, they are certainly teetering on the edge of triviality with "the Earl of Leicester and Richard Heber as collectors of books." Some candidates have suggested that the examiners may have confused Richard Heber with Konrad Haebler, the bibliographer and compiler of *Typenrepertorium der Wiegendrucke*. With any other set of papers, this sort of suggestion could be dismissed as ridiculous.

Q.4.—*What contributions were made by EACH of the following to the development of paper making: John Tate the Younger; John Baskerville; Denis Robert?*

As one tutor has said: "One does not like to make too much of this (?)." But it illustrates so clearly a number of reasons why these examiners fail in their job that one must, at least, make as much of it as there is:—

Firstly, Ximenesitis, or the crossword approach, as exemplified in "John Tate the Younger." Obviously, John Tate and his short-lived mill were known to all and were of no great significance. How, then, to bring this up to Final Examination level?—Add "the Younger" to confuse the issue a little. One feels that they would have been happier to present it (in true crossword spirit) anagrammatically as, say, Jet Natho.

Secondly, lack of knowledge of the subject in which they are

examining, indicated by their blind copying of the misprint "Denis Robert." Nicolas Louis Robert was intended—"a name known to every Registration student as that of the inventor of the paper-making machine" ⁽³⁾—but not, apparently to the examiners or assessors in Final Part 4 (d).

Thirdly, a failing suspected before, but now proved—the use of out-of-date text-books.

Q.5.—What were the chief enactments affecting the Freedom of the Press up to 1700?

"Answer the question as set," is one of Mr. Ferry's Golden Rules for Candidates ⁽⁴⁾. But this question, as set, is virtually unanswerable in this type of examination. It has, therefore, been generally interpreted as "*Freedom of the Press in England up to 1700.*" One of Mr. Ferry's own collaborators has given students a model answer along these lines ⁽⁵⁾. Presumably the candidates who answered this question as amended above gained marks. But what of the candidates who assumed that the examiners meant no less than they said and therefore avoided the question? How can examiners and assessors compensate such candidates when marking the scripts?

Q.7.—What do you know of the circumstances in which printing was introduced into (a) Hispanic America; (b) English-speaking America; and (c) Australia?

Why Australia? Again, one has the impression that an attempt has been made to lift a Registration question to Finals level by a little sting in the tail. The introduction of printing into Australia does not merit a mention on the 22-part analysis of the Historical Bibliography syllabus in the *A.A.L. Guide to the Final Examination*.

SECOND PAPER.

Q.2.—For what reasons is the 1457 Psalter specially notable? Comment briefly upon each.

How could this question possibly test the mature judgment of the candidate? A model answer by the examiners might prove very illuminating.

Q.4.—Write a short account of THREE of the following: Robert Estienne; Thomas Berthelet; Johann Froben; Philippe Grandjean.

The Robert Estienne in question is not specified, but "of course the examiner means the elder." ⁽⁶⁾. How easy it is to make these decisions and to perceive the examiner's intentions outside the examination room. Are the inconsistencies, inaccuracies and ambiguities of these examiners to be accepted? Apparently so; and to make acceptance easier we are assured that "what the candidate loses on the roundabouts he gains on the swings." ⁽⁷⁾ Apart from the fact that there always seem to be many more roundabouts than swings (to say nothing of the Big Dipper), it is difficult to imagine any candidate contemplating these fair-ground hazards with the same equanimity as this tutor.

Q.6 and Q.7 serve to illustrate the examiners' penchant for binding. We are indebted to them in Question 6 for yet another binding style—"Restoration"—this will, no doubt, soon become a firm favourite; and in Question 7, for emphasizing the least important aspect of the Private Press Movement—binding.

The Examination Supplement in the September *Assistant* (like the A.A.L. Guides to the Examinations and the Examiners' Comments) is loaded with admonitory homilies to students. We are left in no doubt that many candidates are ill-prepared for the examinations and that many do foolish things and write stupidly. Among other causes of failure cited are:—

Mechanical repetition of text-book opinions;
failure to answer the question as set; and
selecting and concentrating on parts of the syllabus.

Candidates who indulge in this sort of waywardness should fail. Each failure costs them up to two guineas, is a professional setback and a blow to their morale. What of examiners who similarly indulge? Like most candidates they have another shot in six months' time—but free of charge and having incurred no penalties.

Any criticism of examiners and assessors is invariably met by a welter of words about "Pass Percentage," "Scrupulous fairness in the marking of scripts," and "the Examination Structure." One important issue—the competence of the examiners and assessors—is not discussed; it is taken for granted.

The purpose here has been to challenge that assumption.

REFERENCES.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. The <i>Assistant Librarian</i> , vol. 50 no. 7, Sept. 57. Examination Supplement, p. XVIII. | |
| 2. <i>ibid.</i> p. XVIII. | 3. <i>ibid.</i> |
| 4. <i>ibid.</i> p. 11. | 5. <i>ibid.</i> p. XVIII. |
| 6. <i>ibid.</i> p. XIX. | 7. <i>ibid.</i> p. XIX. |

We apologise to the Lanarkshire County Libraries Staff Guild. The magazine *Pharos* mentioned on page 184 of the last issue belongs to them and not to Lancashire as stated.—Ed.

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Querying the Tutors

Three letters question the accuracy of tutors who contributed to our September Examination Supplement

"Perfect Binding." I don't know the name of the Tutor responsible for this comment on perfect binding but, in most respects, he is totally wrong. After five years of binding by "perfect" methods, in our own Binding Shop, our experience is contrary to the writer's. There is, of course, good and bad perfect binding, and I imagine the writer to be acquainted only with the latter.

I don't know where he gets his information concerning the rebinding of new books bound by the "perfect" method, but nothing in the world could stop the old spine being cut off and the book being rebound by the same method. We have done so, and would be quite willing to demonstrate this fact for the writer.

This is an example of being wrong in fact and not in opinion. Do all these rules apply, I wonder, to the judgments made on library assistants' examination papers? By some of the results within my personal experience, I should think this is probably the case.

JOHN O'LEARY, *Dagenham Public Libraries.*

It is with great hesitancy that I would dare examine my tutors, but some of the remarks made in the *Examination Supplement* on the 1957 Summer Registration B.V. paper, Question 1, require comment.

The *ABC Monthly Railway Guide* is much overrated, and apart from its collection of London suburban timetables, is of no use except for journeys to and from London together with the relevant fares. Thus it cannot help us if we want details of through cross-country trains, such as Plymouth-Glasgow or Ipswich-Edinburgh or Hull-Liverpool; or main lines which do not touch London, such as York-Birmingham-Bristol; or any local services, such as Kidderminster and Stourport or Llwyngwril and Machynlleth, to take random examples.

Bradshaw is mainly a reprint in one volume of the six official *Regional Timetables*, less all their important preliminary information about through trains, seat reservations and other ancillary services. A library should opt for the *Regional Timetables* for complete coverage and economy.

The *L.P.T.B.*, whose timetables are recommended does not exist! The London Transport Executive (formerly L.P.T.B.) does not publish a "country bus time-table" (sic) but 21 separate volumes, each entitled *Local Road and Rail Timetable* and covering a small part of the L.T.E. area.

P. S. MORRISH, *Greenwich Borough Library.*

In the *Examination Supplement*, Mr. Ferry discusses some of the reasons for failure in the L.A. examinations. One of the reasons for failure which he doesn't mention, though, is inefficient or misleading tuition, of which an example occurs on page V of the same supplement. Has the tutor who says that no special types have been cast for the Golden Cockerel Press never seen their *Four Gospels*, set in the face * cut for them to a design by Eric Gill? What is the poor student to do?

RODERICK CAVE, *Islington Public Libraries.*

*Illustrated in Berry and Johnson: *Encyclopaedia of typefaces* (1953), Page 147.

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Modern methods in a University Library

A survey by Daphne R. Cloke and Sylvia M. Bishop

It is felt by the writers that a brief review of the problems and methodology of one of the better-known university libraries may be of some interest to the readers of this journal. A description of the difficulties met and solved in special library work can occasionally assist librarians with bigger problems on a broader scale altogether; and it is hoped that this sketch of procedures followed by the staff of the library will arouse interest, if not imitation.

Staff

Library staff are selected only after rigorous examination as to fitness for the post. It is generally expected that candidates will have passed the preliminary examinations for the Metropolitan Police Force, and will be proficient in Judo, hypnotism and elementary psychiatry; and they are encouraged to employ their spare time in pistol practice and fencing. It is one of the minor complaints of junior staff members that library schools and correspondence courses offer them little furtherance in their career, though a course in physical training would be much appreciated. Staff uniforms, consisting of a cowl and long gown, are provided.

Admission, General Duties and Issue Methods

Members of the library staff take it in turn to give an introductory talk to new students who propose to use the library, including a demonstration on how to fit leg-irons, and the most comfortable methods of adjusting handcuffs. After the initiation ceremony, during which readers are partially shaved and induced to recite aloud the time-honoured formula, "that ye shall ne brynge in, neyther fyre, nor termite, nor yette the dreded woodewyrme," they are required to sign a form devoting a portion of their annual income or grant to postal costs and possible loss of books. Before actual admission to full reading facilities, they are closely screened for undesirable tendencies, and if they satisfy the enquiry-board, each is allotted an individual number and symbol which is branded upon the right hand. This symbol must be shown at the iron grill, which forms the entrance to the main library, and the password for the day is given to the reader who then is at liberty to enter the library. Immediately upon entry, he is conducted to a space upon one of the benches beside the library tables, and helped into the leg-irons and handcuffs by the assistant on duty. During library hours two members of staff walk up and down the aisles between tables, carrying the regulation issue dog-whips, and are summoned by a tug at the gown from readers desiring books or other material. No book can be issued unless the password for the day has been given by the reader. No material is ever removed from the library, except in the special case of finals students and research workers, which will be dealt with in a later paragraph.

Book Protection and Storage

It may be of interest to university librarians who have suffered from damages and loss to publications, to know that, by virtue of the methods pursued here, protection of stock is almost 100 per cent. effective. In the first place, as has already been mentioned, books are issued entirely by staff and are not allowed to leave the library. Both books and readers

are chained to the desks during consultation, and are under constant supervision by the assistant on duty. No books are visible on the shelves, all of them, with the exception of necessary reference works such as Lombroso and the Police Gazette, shelved in the librarians' room, being kept in a large underground stack, whose doors are protected by selenium cell rays which set off a siren alarm when disturbed, unless the circuit is broken by a member of the staff or other accredited individual. Injury or defacement to book pages is almost unknown; readers are issued with rubber gloves for turning pages, and in cases where a reader desires to consult an old or valuable book, he is confined in a strait jacket and permitted the use of an automatic page-turner. With the object of minimizing all possible damage to property, readers are searched on entering and leaving the library, and all unexplained articles, such as watches, fountain pens, and signet rings, are confiscated.

Equipment and Fittings

The library consists of two small rooms and a large rectangular hall, into which the smaller rooms open. One of the smaller rooms is used by the librarian, the other is that in which readers are searched and interrogated before entering or leaving the library. The style of building and decoration is simple almost to austerity. After several experiments with various kinds of flooring and panelling material, the library sub-committee came to the conclusion that the most suitable of these were porcelain tiles, from which bloodstains and similar marks could be easily removed by the caretaking staff. Shelving presented no problems in the reading-room, as all books are shelved in the great basement stack, built into solid rock and running the full length of the building. In the main library, each desk is fitted, as we have already stated, with leg-irons and handcuffs, allowing for six readers, side by side, to each bench. Readers are required to sign a form at the commencement of term stating how many candles they expect to use during the session; special permission must be received before this allowance can be exceeded. On the West Wall of the main reading-room an interesting and varied collection of ancient instruments of torture is permanently displayed.

Assistance to Readers

Readers of long standing and unblemished record ("trusties") are occasionally allowed in procession, accompanied by two assistants, to consult co-operating libraries, when distance makes this possible. Otherwise full postal facilities are available, even for members of the teaching staff of the faculty. Finals students receive preferential treatment: books are taken to their cells, and they are allowed out during certain specified daylight hours for exercise.

Catalogues and Classification Schemes

The author and subject catalogues are for the use of staff only; students are not permitted to exercise the doubtful benefits of choice in reading, but study only works listed by their tutors. The classifiers, therefore, are free to employ Dewey's system to its fullest extent as typified in the British National Bibliography; with the geographical letter tables from Bliss. Cataloguers use the 1941 version of the A.L.A. Cataloguing Rules modified by some introductions from the Prussian Code. Maps before 1800 are arranged in order of paper-makers' watermark.

Readers interested in the methods of procedure obtaining are cordially invited to approach the writers with a view to visiting the library.

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Contrasting Concepts

A comparison between certain aspects of Librarianship in England and Denmark

by *L. Greaves, Derby Public Libraries*

A recent tour of Danish libraries has led to a comparison between the public library system of that country and our own. Such a comparison is inevitable and interesting even though, owing to the nature of the tour, lacking depth and comprehensiveness. Over a dozen library service points were seen, ranging in size from the newly-opened headquarters of the Copenhagen Public Library with a floor space of more than 5,000 square metres to a small parish library situated in a school-room. These notes are written more particularly with the larger libraries in mind.

The library buildings were, generally speaking, recently constructed and excellently designed with a view to expansion and future use. This was revealed particularly at Horsholm, where the present population of 12,000 is expected to treble in the course of the next few years and the library has been built with this very much in mind. Similar forethought was shown at Frederiksberg twenty years ago, for the library shows no sign of overcrowding the building into which it moved in 1935. The quality of the functional and decorative fittings is nothing less than sumptuous everywhere.

Staffing seems to be provided on a generous scale, qualified staff being amply supplemented by trainee librarians, clerks, and, frequently, school children employed solely to shelve returned books. Staff welfare plays a large part in the library system and facilities were excellent.

The bookstock of every library proved striking for three reasons. Firstly, it is invariably bound in a uniform, heavy binding—the practice in Denmark being to purchase the books unbound and have them bound in heavy duty bindings before making them available to the public. Secondly, the books were in meticulous order on the shelves. This is true of all departments. Thirdly, the duplication of individual titles is very striking indeed.

It is rather disconcerting to visit a number of Danish Libraries and to gain everywhere the impression that these libraries, which have for many years been considered amongst the most progressive in the world, do not receive the same amount of use as that accorded to English libraries. It would be difficult to find an English library serving a population of over 10,000 containing less than six readers at any one time. In Denmark it would be quite difficult to find that number of readers in a much larger library. The lack of intensive use is emphasised in a number of ways, by the use of the Newark charging system which cannot cope adequately with heavy issues, by the practice discovered in one library serving 125,000 population whereby all books returned are allowed to accumulate until the schoolchildren employed for that purpose arrive to shelve them in the afternoon, and by the meticulous order and neatness of the books themselves.

The reasons for this apparent lack of use can be seen to some extent if comparison is made with our own system, or rather with our concepts of library service. A primary reason is the quality of the bookstock. Physically the books appear drab and uninviting. This compares unfavourably with the brightness which is now permeating into most of our libraries thanks to the introduction of brighter binding

materials and plastic coverings. There can be no doubt whatsoever that a bright bookstock attracts readers and leads to a more intensive use of the library.

Book selection in Denmark is done on a highly selective basis, and only a limited number of the books published annually (less than 5,000) can be found even in the larger libraries. Popular fiction is scantily provided. There is much duplication of titles in the fiction stock—in one extreme case no less than thirteen copies of a Danish translation of *Treasure Island* were found side by side on the shelves. It was revealed that it takes three months for a new book to reach the reader. This is due in part to the attitude of the publishers who feel that their trade is adversely affected by the libraries, and that a newly-published work should not be made available in libraries for at least six months. It is due also to the fact that books must be bound before use. When the number of available titles is limited it seems strange that the range of books selected in the libraries remains so small. Here surely is a case where as many books as can justifiably be purchased should be purchased in order to give each reader as wide a choice of reading matter as possible. This does not preclude some book selection, there are books at both ends of the scale which would obviously be unsuitable.

It is a fact that every parish library in Denmark has its own basic stock which is supplemented by the loan of volumes from the local central library. There is a fierce pride in these parish libraries, and the aim behind each is the ultimate acquisition of all the "standard" works based on a list of the type deplored by Mr. J. D. Reynolds at the Library Association Conference in 1954 when he said that some thirty years ago we depended largely upon basic lists, but had now passed from that phase. The merest suggestion of reorganisation to provide circulating stocks brought howls of protest from the Danish library staffs who felt that the present system was more than adequate.

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What conclusions can we draw from these comparisons? We know that our buildings, with the exception of those few most recently erected, cannot compare with those of Denmark. We can only move very gradually in that direction. Our provision of staff, particularly as regards professional and non-professional, is in a state of flux, and it can only be said that it does not appear to be as lavish as that in Denmark, while our provisions for the staff are on the whole a mere travesty of those in Denmark. Our bookstock is undoubtedly superior both qualitatively and quantitatively, though we must remember the severe limitation imposed by the relatively small number of books published in Denmark. The provision of periodicals in Denmark is carried to greater extremes than in this country. Although it was not ascertained it could be that this is an unconscious response to the lack of material in book form.

One aspect of librarianship in Denmark which made considerable impact was the fact that the hurly burly associated with the average English library simply did not exist. This certainly leaves the professional staff more time to concentrate more fully on librarianship as opposed to the mechanics of administration and this, in most English libraries, would take the form of "assistance to readers." However there appears to be a marked lack of readers requiring assistance. This point coincides exactly with one made by Mr. F. C. Tighe when talking about his tour of American libraries recently. What do the professional staff do? There is considerable emphasis placed on the catalogue and on the compilation of bibliographies, the latter being well-produced and attractive, but if the tools are not used they are virtually useless. This marks one of the basic differences in the concepts of library service between the two countries. In England the library service has been modified in order to satisfy public demand and has not only retained that public, but is handling an increasing number of books and readers, while in Denmark the library service is more restricted in scope, catering only for the serious members of the community and it appears to lack use.

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SYMBOLIC REVELATIONS

FURTHER THOUGHTS ON THE STATUS OF LIBRARIANS

by R. C. Bengt

Once before in these same pages I had the temerity to suggest that there is nothing particularly wrong with librarians except that they have the misfortune to be human; they have to subscribe to the condition of man. Although it seemed to me that my message was a hopeful one, it happened, nevertheless, that some of our readers (particularly Mr. Cunliffe, I remember) felt nothing but indignant grief at this mild observation. These reactions and further thought have brought it home to me that I did not take the analysis far enough—that I made a superficial diagnosis—that I had not, in fact,

“the clear sight that mills
Down small to the consequence a life requires.”

One must be hopeful in a different way and in the best existentialist manner I have now come to understand the total situation which is not that we are typical of humanity at large in time and space so much as of *homo Britannicus* at this particular moment. What has emerged is that the librarian is *the representative modern Englishman*, or rather he is the improbable symbol of this mythical individual. That is why he has strayed into the post-war novel; that is why contrary to my previous mistaken analysis he is now also actually writing literature. Let us examine some of the portents.

What are the characteristics of post-war Britain? We have been assured that the recalcitrant intellectuals have been absorbed or trodden into the lower middle classes. Long ago this happened to librarians. We have been notified that the middle classes have been “levelled” or trampled into a plaintive mass (no room at the top). That was our portion long since. Finally we have heard about U and non-U and of all the complications of social climbing and slipping, the acrobatics of individuals who are uncertain of their status in a society where gradations are too subtle and shifting to be endured. Surely that too has been our predicament. One cause of this is that your librarian as a result of skipping through too many books has a greater awareness than he can afford; he tends to be semi-educated above his station. What has happened then is that large and representative sections of our bewildered people have come to a region which librarians have inhabited for many years. In consequence we understand so well the typical post-war hero who (far from heroic) is conscious of having just missed some elusive boat or bus and along with angry young men and furious old women of all ages and sexes roars and rants at the departing vehicle, whatever it was.

This is not all. During the last few years innumerable nervous leader writers have passed into the gulf which is said to yawn between the humanities and science—between idiot aesthetes and brilliant apes. Humanity, we are told, is being torn in half and so far all the efforts of the prophets have not joined the halves together again. This also has been our traditional dilemma (except that our apes have not all been brilliant). Let me for the sake of brevity take two instances more. Our age has been called—amongst other things—an age of bad faith; i.e. it is an age when people subscribe to doctrines in which they are unable to believe. Has not this sometimes happened to the professional faith of

the librarian? Finally, when some years ago Dr. Bronowski wished to take a representative figure for an era obsessed with a vicarious violence, he chose the shy bespectacled librarian reading Faulkner with her cocoa.

It will be apparent by now that the spiritual problems of our time are being worked out in our own persons. In the thirties the symbolic figures were those ill-adjusted creatures the mountaineer and the kestrel (the kestrel which willy nilly has to hover high in the air to catch a grasshopper). To-day our heraldic emblematic figures should be the *librarian* and the *wombat* (Peter Ustinov on being faced with one is reported to have said, "What is a wombat?" and the dictionary answer was "an inoffensive terrestrial and fossorial animal.").

What are the implications of all this? Chiefly that the possibilities in the Arts are endless. We have had our librarian in the novel. Imagine a volume of verses in the modern pop-Gunn manner with titles like "Arguments for not reading" or "Reasons for not writing poetry." Typical lines suggest themselves at once. "They pay the fine because the future's past" repeated at the end of each verse, or "The ones you look for won't be there," etc. Or in a different vein an Eliot parody (although this is more characteristic of the forties) "I have measured out my life with Smiths and Moons," or, if you prefer, with Mills and Boons. What of the other arts? Some new Butler must sculpt one of us as the unknown post-war Englishman. Who shall we suggest for model? One thinks . . . but no, that would be invidious. Again in opera Britten's heroes, it is said, are never tragic but essentially pathetic. As I said, the possibilities are infinite and the editor invites suggestions for the librarian-in-art-as-the-symbol-of-the-twentieth-century.

We have said enough. It is clear that grave new responsibilities rest upon our shoulders. It is now up to us to appear on television and in the Sunday Press; we must pronounce upon the fate of the nation and the state of the world. Perhaps they will give us a special mascot allowance—a "symbolic weighting." But then we should not be representative any more.

A Vote for Miss Willson

Having watched with increasing dismay the pages of the *Assistant Librarian* becoming a battleground for petty bickerings over trivial points, from my outpost (not quite of the Empire, but where I still like to wave the Union Jack occasionally) I was most heartened by Miss Willson's address published in the August issue.

I was glad to see her urging us all to emphasise our importance, to justify it and to show people just why we are needed. After seeing your August issue containing also the keen appraisal of Raymond Chandler's work and the interesting thoughts to be considered in a subject department, I felt justified in raising my flag and giving it an extra wave. Something which the *Assisatnt* hasn't encouraged me to do for some months.

Having watched some 3,000 American librarians wrestling with reorganisation problems, I can well believe that there are larger horizons. Let us look to them. Whatever the species of librarian, fundamentally we all wish to get the right book (or right information—call it what you will) to the right person at the right time. Or do we?

Let us have publicity, but let us have the right kind of publicity. Let us discuss, but not bicker.

Thank you for the August issue, and my vote like yours, Mr. Editor, would be for Miss Willson.

Felicity Page, *Ohio, U.S.A.*

Miss Page will be glad to know that Miss Willson has agreed to be a candidate for the L.A. Council for which voting papers will be issued this month.

FROM CLASSICS TO ANNUALS

by
Anne Struthers, Children's Librarian, Lanark County

In the field of children's books there is a vast amount of material available which does not deserve a place on our junior shelves. Two types of children's books which demand particular care in selection are classics and annuals.

It is not enough to have mere copies of classics on the shelves: it is essential to have copies of the best editions available, or young readers will perhaps be discouraged for life from reading some of the best children's books. Inferior editions may be moderately attractive when new, but a few issues soon emphasise inferiority of paper, print, illustration and binding. This means that the children's librarians must be vigilant in their selection. Coventry City Libraries are to be commended for *A List of Some Good Editions of the Children's Classics*, 1954, which gives full details of some of the best editions available. The following gives an idea of the extensive choice of edition which is often available, and shows the necessity for choosing the best:—

	Good editions.	Poorer editions.
Little Women	Dent, Blackie	Blackie, Brayne, Juvenile Productions, Rylee, Studley.
Robinson Crusoe	Collins, Dent, O.U.P.	Blackie, Collins, Harrap, Lunn, Rylee, Shoe, Lane.
Treasure Island	Blackie, Collins, Dent, O.U.P.	Blackie, Coker, Hamlyn, Jenkins, Lewis, Wells, Gardner, Whitman.

The problem of classics is not solved with the provision of an attractive edition. Others which arise concern the provision of abridged editions and the provision of classics not so far available in very satisfactory editions.

In most cases the original work is preferable to an abridged edition. The type of work which does sometimes justify an abridged edition is the classic or minor classic which would still be very readable if tedious passages were cut out. One of the best examples of such an abridged classic is *The Wide, Wide World* by Elizabeth Wetherell which has been abridged and illustrated by J. L. Brisley.

Abridged versions may also be justified if they are going to introduce younger readers to books, and if they are going to provide backward readers with their only taste of the classics. It is a pity that the Harrap series of abridged classics is not produced in a more inviting format, e.g. *Children's Black Beauty*, *Children's Alice*, *Children's Brer Rabbit*. It is also a pity that Ward Lock's pleasantly illustrated abridged versions of *Robin Hood* and *Treasure Island* are not provided with better print. Large type is a good feature of the classics which Blackie have produced in the *Easy to Read Books*, but illustrations are disappointing, e.g. *Pinocchio*, *Adventures of Gulliver*. Among the most attractive abridged editions available are those published by Publicity Products, e.g. *Heidi*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Alice*. The original bindings of these editions are paper boards.

Well produced abridged editions of classics are permissible in the library, but I feel that strip editions are not. It does not say much for our children if they are considered capable of absorbing their classics only in such a mutilated form. It says even less for the library if it harbours such productions.

Several classics are still only available in poor editions and present a challenge to publishers such as Dent or the Oxford University Press, e.g. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *What Katy Did*. A good adult edition is to be preferred to a poor junior edition, e.g. the Collins edition of *What Katy Did* and *What Katy Did at School*, illustrated by V. J. Bertoglio. There are also several minor classics which are worthy of reproduction in good editions, e.g. *The Carved Lion*, by Mrs. Molesworth; *Four to fourteen* by Mrs. Ewing. Dent are to be commended for having revived such classics as *The Cuckoo Clock* by Mrs. Molesworth and *Hans Brinker* by M. P. Dodge.

I have tried to stress the importance of good editions of the classics. I also want to stress the importance of extensive duplication of these editions.

In the normal course of events, I feel that a reader should have access to the classic wanted after little or no delay. The disappointment of not getting the classic wanted immediately could be alleviated by the provision of a reference collection of best editions of the most used classics.

Should we provide Annuals ?

At the other end of the scale are annuals, a vast number of which are produced each year. The immediate question which arises with annuals is that of whether they should be provided by the library at all. Ideally the answer would be to exclude them entirely or to at least limit them to the best available, e.g. *Daily Mail*, *Collins Magazine*, *Commonwealth and Empire*. In view of their short lives if for no other reason, it would seem an unwarrantable waste of money to buy them. Most children acquire an annual or two at Christmas and arrange loans with their friends. It is doubtful if annuals make any contribution to reading development as they mainly encourage a taste for easy and lazy reading. I therefore object to a theory that it is the library's duty to provide annuals. Children's librarians strive to pass on the best traditions in children's books to their readers: annuals can hardly be said to be part of that tradition.

I have no patience with another argument in favour of annuals: that they are for the benefit of readers who read nothing else and borrow nothing if an annual is not available. The children's librarian who admits to such readers is faced with a challenge to lead her omnivorous annual readers to other fields. If librarians adopted a policy of wholesale rejection of inferior annuals (and inferior classics) fewer might be produced.

Annuals can soon be classified into various groups:—

- (1) Better quality annuals which contain illustrated stories and articles and are reasonably well produced, e.g. *Collins Magazine*, *Daily Mail*, *Eagle*, *Girl*, *Commonwealth and Empire*, *B.B.C. Children's Hour*.
- (2) Annuals of an entirely entertaining kind which are attractively produced with moderately good paper, print, and bright illustrations, if not strong bindings, e.g. *Teddy Tail*, *T.V. Comic*, *Bobby Bear's*.
- (3) Annuals which might be suitable for library use if they were more satisfactorily produced, e.g. *Collins Girl's*, *Every Boy's*, *Splendid Book for Girls*, *Our Favourite Story Book*.
- (4) Annuals which are poorly produced and unsuitable for library use, e.g. *Chatterbox*, *Freddie Mills*, *Ace Book of Stories*, *Archie Andrews*, *Tip-top*, *Bumper Book for Children*.
- (5) Annuals which are thoroughly unsuitable for library use by reason of both content and production.

This broad classification gives some idea of the number of annuals available and shows the need for the selection of the best annuals available from a large number of inferior productions. If annuals must be provided at all they should be the best available. This should also apply to classics: if a library is not going to provide the best editions of classics, it would be better with none than with some of the poor editions.

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Inflation In Education

Council Notes—12 September

The September Council meeting was a fairly quiet production of little more than two-act proportions. Education provided both threads of the plot, the effects of syllabus revision being explored on the one hand and the effect of the inflationary spiral upon correspondence courses on the other.

The passage up to the point where the standing committees report their decisions and recommendations to the Council was littered with the usual numerous items of file-clearing debris. After the long summer recess these lack at the September meeting even the virtue of topicality, and only one seems worthy of repetition here. The Yorkshire Division were warmly commended for their presentation of 18 guineas to the John Rylands Fund, an incident which gave the President cause to wonder whether the Wars of the Roses were at last over.

Although the Press and Publications always open the batting when the committees report, they have for some time now escaped the really hostile bowling. On this occasion, however, they were immediately accused by Mr. Davinson of "woolly enthusiasm" concerning some of their suggestions for future publications. This criticism was survived, and the Council was entertained briefly while the Hon. Publications Officer read them a somewhat exotic letter from the Islamic Library of Indonesia requesting free copies of some of our publications. This request was refused, despite Mr. Carver's suggestion that we might swap some of our books for some selections from the Majalas mentioned in the letter. If this is obscure it is unavoidable—nobody seemed very sure what Majalas were, and Mr. Tynemouth managed to interpret them as "Indonesian pyjamas."

Mr. Davey climbing to his feet to present the Education Committee report was, of course, the signal for a change of atmosphere. Education has become such a gory battlefield in recent Council meetings that levity would have been out of place. Playing for time, the President deferred the clash on correspondence course charges and fees until we had heard the Finance Committee. Energies were therefore concentrated on the revision of the syllabus which is in progress, and on F.P.E. results, which always manage to arouse comment these days. In connection with the former a long memorandum from the Librarians' Group of the Institution of Professional Civil Servants was received without much enthusiasm, and a motion was passed for forwarding to the L.A. Council. This asks that some indication be given at an early date of the measure of compensation which will be awarded to those who have passed F.P.E. and parts of Registration when the new syllabus comes into force. The Education Committee wanted also to ask the L.A. for a report on the setting and marking of F.P.E. papers by examiners. Their concern seemed to be shared by many members of the Council, but it was agreed that the examiners' reports might carry the answers to our problems, and the matter is to be again considered at the next meeting.

The Policy Committee had nothing very sensational to offer. Its suggestion that the report on welfare and working conditions in non-public libraries be referred back to the Greater London Division was approved. G.L.D. are to be asked to revise the report in the light of comments received from some special librarians who were invited to offer criticism.

The Conference Committee confirmed that next year's conference will be held at University Hall, Liverpool, from 28-30 March. The theme of the conference, which probably doesn't indicate very much at this stage, is to be **IMPACT: Libraries in Society**. The most controversial matter here was the recommendation to limit attendance to 150 in order to keep the discussion groups of manageable size. This met with some criticism and gave Mr. A. C. Jones an opportunity to refer to "procrustean beds," but the recommendation was approved by a small majority.

A number of minor questions were raised on the Finance Committee report, but it was clear that there was one item which dwarfed all others. The President, with great determination, kept this one back until after the tea-break, perhaps in the hope that refreshments would do something to soften the warlike looks which were converging on the Chairman of the Finance Committee. Briefly the

situation was that the Education Committee wanted to increase the fees to correspondence course students to 3 guineas and to increase the payments to tutors, revisers, editors, etc. all round. They were supported on this occasion by a memorandum by the Honorary Treasurer. The Finance Committee had again reaffirmed its belief that increases to tutors were not necessary.

Mr. Davinson was feverishly working out columns of figures and periodically leapt to his feet to inform the Council that the recommendations of the Treasurer meant economic disaster. Mr. Atkinson, more humbly, admitted: "Like the Treasurer, I'm in the dark about financial matters." In the end the Education Committee, which has been conducting its trade union battle on behalf of tutors for so long, may be said to have won. An amendment by the Honorary Secretary satisfied those who were worried about declining balances and met the Education Committee's claims for its tutors. The only one to lose in all this was the long-suffering student, who will now have to pay £3 10s. for his correspondence course.

Still waiting for us on the agenda was the dark shadow of *The Privileged Reader*. We covered again the complaint-strewn ground, heard letters from the Birmingham Staff Association and the Reference and Special Libraries Section, considered conflicting motions from two Divisions, and finally quietly passed to next business. All present must now hope that this unpleasant episode will before November have died of old age.

The Council passed to its annual business of appointing or nominating its officers for the following year. Mr. Tomlinson's well-deserved succession to the Presidency was confirmed with acclamation, and the Honorary Secretary was appointed Vice-President. John Jones, the present Sussex Division secretary, was nominated unopposed as Honorary Secretary, and if he is elected the tiny Sussex Division will have supplied two of the current national officers of the A.A.L.—sufficient answer, perhaps, to those whose permanent fear it is that the big battalions of the Greater London Division will dominate the association. Messrs. Holloway and W. G. Smith bravely consented to carry their respective burdens as Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Editor for another year. Two willing workers had come forward with offers to succeed Mr. New as Honorary Publications Officer. This appointment is not made until next January, and in the meantime the Council co-opted Mr. G. Langley, of Nottingham, as heir apparent to this particular throne.

ERIC MOON.

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(Section of the Library Association)

EDITOR: W. G. SMITH

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DECEMBER, 1957

Examining the Examiners

From E. F. Ferry who edits our Examination Supplement:-

Your editor sees fit to devote the editorial in the November *Assistant* to a continuation of my notes on the problems of examination failures (September, 1957). Fair enough, but a few points cannot go unchallenged, much as I dislike wrangling in public. First of all, the reference to my association with a protest about the F.P.E. at the last A.A.L. Council. "Protest" is not quite the right word to apply to an inquiry after information, and, in any case, the whole matter was deferred pending the receipt of examiners' reports. Perhaps I may be allowed to make my attitude clear. I am disturbed at the drop in pass percentage at F.P.E. stage, and I *would* like to know where tutors and students are going wrong. Preliminary changed to Elementary which in turn changed to Entrance without a great deal of intrinsic alteration; that is, the subjects were roughly the same, and the pass percentage did not fall to an appreciable extent. The F.P.E. brought a new concept of our first examination, with a disastrous drop in the number of successes. In spite of specimen papers, the published syllabus and subsequent examination papers, I and many others feel that we may be under-teaching or over-teaching. If Mr. Smith thinks back to the motion before Council, he will surely see that it was a request for information, not a protest.

Secondly, the statement in the September, 1956, supplement about ambiguity was made by one of the contributing tutors. An editor is not necessarily responsible for the opinions of his contributors—but perhaps this is something which Mr. Smith knows already.

One final point. I am accused of being fatuous when I state that to sit an examination without preparation is "a waste of an examiner's time." When I wrote that, I had no intention of moving any student to tears, but merely to state a fact which is true, and Mr. Smith, throughout his editorial, as good as admits it. "Awareness of current library and literary controversies," "The series of A.A.L. Guides to the Examinations proved a useful aid," "general knowledge, experience and, once again, wide periodical reading . . ."—what are these but preparation? Enterprise is praiseworthy, but foolhardiness is not, and, I repeat, to enter for an examination *without preparation* is just that—and you can take it from me that people do it. I know—I'm an examiner, who is very much concerned about the educational work of the L.A. and its effect upon professional status.

From P. H. Sewell, Head of the North-Western Polytechnic Library School:-

It is certainly desirable that no lethargy nor undue complacency should be permitted those concerned with professional education. It is also desirable that any professional debate should be based on facts.

Here are some facts concerning part-time classes in the Department of Librarianship at the North-Western Polytechnic.

The First Professional Examination calls for breadth rather than depth of perception and the kindling of interest in professional matters. Tutors for this syllabus are therefore chosen as much for personal qualities as for professional competence. Having secured the services of a tutor whom I feel I can trust, I would hesitate to direct him exactly how he should conduct the course. If one tutor thinks that an appreciation of the principles of classification can best be inculcated by stressing primarily its logical element and another its practical usefulness, I would not feel it necessary to tell either that he was wrong. At the same time records of attendance, of written work and of examination results as well as the unsolicited comments of students and their colleagues tell me a good deal about the progress of the class as a group.

Part-time lecturers for Registration and Final classes work fairly closely with full-time staff teaching the same subjects. This collaboration is carried out through casual conversations, end-of-term conferences and the week-end conferences arranged by S.C.E.L., in which N.W.P. lecturers have taken a prominent part. There has been recent collaboration in the production of "hand-outs" and of teaching syllabuses.

Librarianship is a relatively small profession in which one gets to know professional colleagues well even before they come to lecture. We have, however, a small representative Librarianship Advisory Committee which contributes useful suggestions about courses and lecturers. The report after a full inspection of the Department in 1955 gave a picture of standards of teaching and competence quite different from that suggested by your editorial. Many tutors, part-time as well as full-time, have attended short courses on teaching technique, and we receive occasional "refresher" lectures at the college. I write this not in a glow of satisfaction, but to put matters more into perspective.

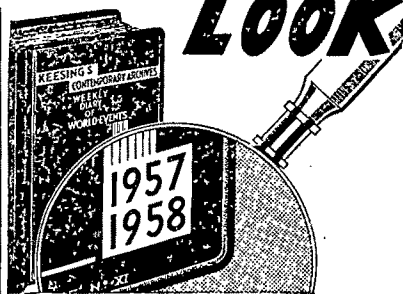
Abler and more mature students can often study independently with considerable success; indeed private study is an important part of all learning. Most students, however, undoubtedly benefit from tuition, from group interchange of ideas, from organised visits and from the visual aids and other facilities which a college can provide.

From Edward Dudley, Lecturer at the Ealing Library School:-

I am, of course, aware that it is your practice to let fly in all directions in the knowledge that you are sure to hit someone who will respond and add small coals to the smoky fires you stoke up under the editorial chair, and this knowledge has in the past always restrained me from writing letters to you. But "Examiners and Tutors" is such a tenden-

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tious piece of writing that I cannot refrain from protest.

No, I am not over-concerned with the Examiner-Lecturer-Student bruhaha—after all, one of the hazards of my job to which I can usually adjust myself. The qualities lecturers don't possess and the opinions of *one* foreign student on an unnamed but identifiable Library School interest me but mildly. But what appears to be your own attitude to library education is sufficiently alarming to call for exposure. It appears to be another example of the minor disease of the reason to which librarians are subject—that of generalising loftily from one's own limited experience. Look—this is how W. G. Smith became successively A.L.A. and F.L.A., and it can work for you, too. Whether W. G. Smith became an educated librarian as well as a Fellow is another question. The assumptions (a) that there is too much emphasis on reading books, and (b) that there should be greater awareness of current controversies, are false and harmful. ("It is surprising how little of the formal text-book reading is really required," you say. But what strikes all lecturers and not a few students is how few "formal text-books" we have and how deficient in some respects are many of these few). On the contrary, it is the experience of many lecturers that too many students do not read enough, do not explore books themselves and are often willing to go no further than lecture notes. It is true that this attitude is sometimes encouraged by the appalling standards of book-selection to be seen in many staff libraries. These reading lists you deplore may in some cases be "out of all proportion to the real requirements of the examination" (do you mean by this that the student can read less and still pass the examination?) but their intention is to produce a professionally well-read librarian, a librarian of parts. Unnecessary, you say. Scrap this useless book-lore and fill your veins with the heady liquor of controversy. This doesn't surprise me at all, for it is an assumption on which you base the editing of our journal with the consequent flatulent rumblings which try to do duty for thought. It is true that there are some aspects of librarianship which would benefit from reasoned polemic and the workings of the

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dialectical process, but it is also true that there are others which would not. Most parts of the syllabus (and of professional education) require some knowledge of facts and, further, *a way of looking at facts*. This requires some contact with lively and mature minds. Lecturers, realising their own deficiencies, ask students to read and read widely.

So you passed a number of examinations on one book. Why don't you go a step further and plead that all reading in library education be abolished? Lecturers could then get down to the business of so organising courses that lectures and essays in themselves would be sufficient which would tidy up things all round.

In short, sir, your attitude to professional education seems to bear the CC41 stamp of utility. It is not good enough for a body of workers trying to persuade others—and themselves—that they form a profession worthy of respect.

YOUR EDITOR COMMENTS :-

With Mr. Ferry I have no quarrel and apologise for attributing to him the words of another tutor (although the remark in question does appear to be a general editorial comment rather than an individual tutor's). He does not, however, dispute the point, which is worth repeating:—

“There is more ambiguity than one expects to see in carefully prepared papers. This is most unfair to students.”

Mr. Sewell is rightly proud of his School and my relations with him, as one of the part-time tutors in whom he has placed his trust, have been cordial. He is making a conscientious attempt to overcome the difficulties of the present system and considerable credit is due to him for the efforts. They should not, however, be allowed to obscure the point that most tutors, taking the country as a whole, are not really trained in teaching. This is not intended as criticism of the tutors; the part-time ones are grossly underpaid and obviously must have difficulty in fitting in all the preparation and marking with their normal full-time jobs and any other interests they may have.

Informal supervision may be possible when the part-time classes are organised by a full-time Library School, but Mr. Sewell is completely ignoring the fact that many of them are not (Mr. Dudley would say that he is “generalising from his own experience”!). In such cases the supervision is often negligible unless the tutor happens to be visited by a government inspector (who will no doubt talk loftily about it being the education rather than the examination results that count—try telling that to a student on general division pay). Mr. Sewell's facts are worth noting, but do not affect the main argument.

Our typically mild comments seem to have roused another friend, Mr. Dudley, to unusual wrath. The result is a splendid piece of invective in which, by gaily lifting telescope to blind eye, Nelson makes sure that he does not understand the article he purports to criticise.

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than formal text-books. Mr. Dudley admits that many of them are deficient, yet calmly goes on to recommend their use. His statement that greater awareness of current controversies is not desirable flatly contradicts the view of many tutors who are well aware that examination questions are not infrequently set as a direct result of recent periodical articles, often controversial. Does he not think it a good thing for students to know the current pros and cons of “service in depth,” subject division of

libraries, extended co-operative schemes, the extent of catalogues desirable in varying types of libraries, stock editors and their policies, use of professional staff, and many other current controversies? Does he not recall that he himself was part-author of a controversial article in this journal which led directly to the setting of an examination question? It would appear that Mr. Dudley is to produce well-educated librarians on a surfeit of inefficient library text-books.

After throwing stones at the editor, Mr. Dudley builds his own glass-house of wild generalisations. Who said anything about "useless booklore" or implied that reading be abolished. Only Mr. Dudley, who seems intent on building his own sandcastles for the pleasure of knocking them down again. My complaint was against too much formal library text-book reading. Other reading is essential to a good librarian and, for the L.A. examinations, I specifically recommended wide reading of literary and library periodicals. So far as the general education of a librarian goes, I would advocate considerable reading of books in many subjects, but certainly not Mr. Dudley's deficient text-books.

I did not generalise from my own experience. I merely wondered, having regard to personal experience, whether private study is not a better way of passing examinations *for anyone not able to attend a full time course*. I still wonder, in spite of Mr. Dudley's apparent denial of the right to do so, and would be interested to hear of other students' experiences. One of the objects of the *Assistant Librarian* is to gather together the views of younger members of the profession in order to help people to draw general conclusions.

To quote further from personal experience, I took a formal part-time course in Registration Group B and found that there was so much reading that it did not leave sufficient time to spend browsing among books if there was to be any time left for non-library activities—I suggest that no good librarian should confine himself to librarianship—the wider the general interests the better). I failed. I then abandoned formal text-book reading and allocated private time every day to be spent either browsing in the reference library or reading periodicals in the staff library. I passed with honours in assistance to readers and merit in bibliography, and what is more, felt that I knew far more about books than if I had taken any number of formal part-time courses.

For the whole of the finals examinations, a similar policy was pursued of avoiding the formal course, limiting the amount of library-text book reading, reading all the library periodical literature possible, visiting libraries and talking to librarians. It is not suggested that this is an adequate substitute for a *full-time* course, but is it not legitimate to wonder if this type of private study is not better than a formal *part-time* course? There are obvious difficulties to such a plan in some parts of the country where it may not be possible to visit other libraries. Even so, students in such places may have something to contribute to a discussion on the merits of various forms of part-time study, and we hope that they will not be deterred by the heavy tutorial hand of Mr. Dudley.

As to the CC41—Mr. Dudley may care to remember that it was introduced as a reasonable standard of quality in difficult times. Our road is still rocky.

Only one candidate in the First Professional Examination this Summer gained an Honours mark and she was an A.A.L. Correspondence Course student. She is Mrs. I. Mitchell, of St. Andrew's University, who receives the A.A.L.'s Martin Award of £5 5s.

ARE YOU AN AD-DICT?

by R. L. PEARCE, Folkestone Public Library

Librarians are an odd lot on the whole. How can anybody who is constantly witnessing the seamy side of life (successful modern novels), the self-undressing of the famous (successful modern autobiographies) and the sexual goings on among Asian primitives (successful modern travel books), remain impervious to all this and never feel compelled to throw his issue trays or photo-charges in the air and "do a Gauguin" to find adventure and success first-hand for himself?

Probably the answer is that having spent half his young life in study for L.A. exams., the average assistant, an incurable optimist, awaits that spark from heaven: the job that will provide all the above ingredients whilst retaining a little scope for librarianship.

The new grading scheme, which knocks most of the caterpillars slowly climbing the A.P.T. scales back into the A.P.T.I. box for the second time in a few years, has given added urgency to the quest of the moon-seekers. The numbers of us who devour the back page of the T.L.S. every Friday, like football pools checkers with the Sunday sports page, have increased rapidly in the last few weeks. How we wish we had pressed for that Kansas job. (The rolling plains . . . everything's up to date. etc.). I, myself, had been looking for something like "Young, care-worn librarian wanted for South Seas Paradise island: six months' leave with pay. £2,000 salary. Must be good sunbather. Cigarette allowance. No F.L.A.s need apply." But then there appeared the ad. we have all seen by now, headed "Bulawayo Public Library."

Bulawavo! The swing of the word! It suggests a canoe full of steaming blacks, with the witchdoctor in the bows chanting "Aieeoko!" and the paddlers responding with the stirring chorus, "Bul-a-way-O!" There I am in the stern, immaculate in k.d. and pith helmet, casually glancing over my draft report on the reading population of Bulawayo and district, soon to be issued by Unesco.

Then the chief's office, or hut, lined with skull shelves: "Ah, Pearce," he snaps, "Have a John Collins. I want you to safari round the branches this month. See if you can trace news of your predecessor when you're in the okapi territory."

Later, it appears he has been attacked by a reader, name of Tarzan, whose wife, Jane, he had blacklisted. But then I am a book-of-the-film type and one should get the facts behind these advertisements, so I turn to *The Quest for Africa* by Schiffer. I find *Francis Flynn* at Chaka's court in 1825, described his residence as Bulawayo, the "Abode of the Dead." Is this prophetic, or does it merely mean it's a sort of African Frinton? The ad. says to apply to Box 586, Bulawayo, so perhaps Flynn wasn't kidding! Now try Bartlett's *The Struggle for Africa*. Quote: "Lusaka and Bulawayo are boom towns such as one might have found in the Far West at the beginning of the century." That's more like it! Now the chief says, "Pearce, it's your leave period. Why not stake a claim up at Matabele point? Young Buggins from Colchester, who came here to seek his fortune, struck it rich up there last Easter."

Probably not a true picture. My last attempt is Gunther's *Inside Africa*; he says, "The name, Bulawayo, means 'Place of Slaughter.'"

Frank G? Oh, no! The bad omens are there all right and unfortunately the dreams fade for this time.

Where's the new T.L.S.? Anything going?

Timetables

by P. S. MORRISH, Greenwich Public Libraries

THE Railway timetable has been a favourite butt for Mr. Punch's charming humour: trains that never arrive, that depart before they appear, and connections which never meet. Like the poetic rolling English road, Mr. Punch's trains took the longest and most roundabout route. The humour is not entirely misdirected, for even to-day connections are advertised in the *Western Region Timetable* to depart Waterloo at 9 a.m. and arrive at Bradford (Yorks.) at 7 p.m. via Andover, Swindon, Cheltenham, Birmingham and Derby! The railway time-table does prove a difficult obstacle to many an adult enquirer who will need kindly and unerring guidance from the librarian. The standard works on reference librarianship say little about timetables, which are too often regarded as ephemeral material. Here it is attempted to analyse various railway time-tables now available and to assess their relative merits.

The railway time-tables available at present are of four types. Firstly there are the British Railways Regional Public Time-tables, entitled *Passenger Services* These are published twice a year for summer and winter schedules commencing in June and September respectively. The dates on which the tables will come into force, will vary slightly from year to year. These time-tables are published in six parts, one for each region, distinguished by a cover in the region's colour—Western (chocolate), Southern (green), Midland (maroon), Eastern (dark blue), North-eastern (orange), and Scottish (light blue). In addition, smaller booklets containing suburban services for select areas, are published, the *Southern Region Suburban Services Time-table* for example. Pamphlets of amendments are published from time to time. These are not normally available separately, but are supplied free on request. Each new amendment pamphlet cumulates previous amendments.

The second time-table is *Bradshaw's British Railways Guide* . . . It appears monthly and is mainly a cumulation in one volume of the Regional Time-tables. The third important publication is the *A.B.C. Railway Guide* which appears monthly. This is of little use except for journeys and fares to and from London, but it does give alternative bus services between main railway centres and places where few trains call. The last category comprises all the locally published railway time-tables. These often combine bus and train time-tables for a locality, one of the many examples being Headley's *Kent County Time-table*. From British Railways' point of views, these last two categories are unofficial publications.

The coverage of the Regional Time-tables naturally involves some overlapping, especially on routes which pass through several regions or which lie on regional borders. For instance, the E.R. time-table showing Scottish services from King's Cross does not stop abruptly between Doncaster and Selby, but traces through trains to their destinations. On cross-country services there is also some overlapping, the tables showing services between Bath-Salisbury-Southampton; Didcot-Newbury-Southampton, and Bodmin Road-Bodmin-Pastow, being in both the S.R. and the W.R. Timetables. But this principle is not uniformly applied. The W.R. administers services between Birmingham (New Street)-Worcester-Gloucester-Bristol, but the full time-table for this route, in the middle of W.R. territory, is to be found in the M.R. time-table. Similarly, the former Great Central Railway main line from Marylebone to Sheffield, now administered partly by W.R., partly by M.R., and partly by E.R., is to be found only in the E.R. Time-table.

A Regional Time-table is usually arranged in three parts: preliminary information, the time-tables and miscellaneous information. The preliminary information begins with *contents* and *index to stations*. The index is alphabetical and references are to table numbers. Some places which are not stations are included so that the reader can trace connecting bus or steamer services. A selective fare table is usually given and there follows a coloured section giving details of named trains, through services, sleeping car services and summary tables. The miscellaneous information, which will be discussed below, sometimes appears before the tables, sometimes after. The preliminary matter and coloured pages are followed by the time-tables themselves. These are serially numbered and of a standard conventional pattern. If the table extends over several pages, the list of stations is repeated, but the mileage is only given against the first list. The *up* table is normally separate from the *down* table. The table numbers are noted at the top of each page, and the principal stations served at the top of each table. Each train is represented by a column of timings which are to be read downwards. A journey stops either at the bottom of the table, or where the timings cease, or where a thick horizontal line is drawn across the column with the word *stop* underneath. Any subsequent timing under a *stop* represents another train. Care must be taken to distinguish *a.m.* from *p.m.*: in bus time-tables this is frequently done by printing *p.m.* times in bold type, but in railway time-tables the abbreviations *a.m.* and *p.m.* are used. These cannot always be inserted in some cases when journeys begin before noon and end after, so the table as a whole must be carefully inspected. Sunday services are given separate tables, and, especially in the summer time-table, Saturday services often are as well, so the day must also be checked.

All railway time-tables use a vast array of symbols and letters to refer the reader to notes and often more than one alphabet is used, the different styles of letter being significant (bold, light, sans and so on). Few of these symbols and letters have the same meaning from one table to another, but figures in the station column are always cross-references to other time-tables, while TC indicates *through train* (or coaches); RC, *restaurant car*; SC, *sleeping car*; and N (capital condensed) or 2 indicates *second class only*. Finally, SX or X or E are often used to indicate *Saturdays excepted*, and SO or S, *Saturdays only*.

The miscellaneous information, which may follow the tables or be included with the preliminary information in the Regional Time-tables, mainly concerns steamer services, bus interavailability, luggage and goods facilities, hotels and refreshment rooms.

Bradshaw's *British Railways Official Guide and Hotel Directory* appears monthly and is mainly a cumulation in one volume of the current Regional Time-tables, and like them is entirely revised twice a year for the summer and winter services. Most monthly issues contain a loose sheet of amendments. The arrangement is straightforward. The title page, with *contents* follows a thick hotel directory: next there is the *station index*, arranged alphabetically, giving all regional stations (and other places) in one sequence with reference to the tables. These are not numbered consecutively, but are numbered as they are in each Regional Time-table, though Bradshaw prefixes each table number with a letter indicating the region to avoid confusion. A very brief section of miscellaneous information follows, concerning seat reservation, Pullman cars, sleeping cars and Continental services. This section only gives an outline of facilities and reference will have to be made to the Regional Time-tables for full details. The time-tables follow in order: Western, Southern, Midland, Eastern, North-eastern and Scottish. *Bradshaw concludes* with a miscellaneous collection of time-tables including London Transport (Metropolitan Line); Isle of Man; Snowdon Mountain Railway; Liverpool, Birkenhead and Rock Ferry; and the Ulster Transport Commission lines. A map of the British Railways system is inserted inside the back cover.

Skinner's *A.B.C. Railway Guide* is a very different publication. Like *Bradshaw*, there is a hotel directory at the beginning, though the title page and *contents* precede it. The main body of the Guide is an alphabetical list of stations under towns or places, and if there is more than one station, that on the main route is given first. A certain amount of miscellaneous information is offered for each town: county, distance from London, map reference, population, early closing days, route out of London and fares from London. The station entry then states the trains to and from London. In the case of places with infrequent train services, connecting bus services with a more important rail centre are noted. After this station index, there is a valuable section of London suburban time-tables, covering places as far afield as Gillingham, Horsham, Basingstoke, Reading, Aylesbury, St. Albans, Hertford and Southend. Also included in this unique general collection of London suburban time-tables, are summary tables giving the first and last trains on each L.T.E. line ("underground" and "tube."). The *Guide* concludes with a section on ferry services, cross channel services and boat trains. A somewhat outdated map is inside the front cover.

The local time-tables are too numerous and diverse to discuss at present. As the majority of them detail all public transport in the area covered—rail, road, water and air—they are invaluable for local reference. Headley's *Kent County Time-table* has been cited as an example; another excellent production is the London Transport *Local Road and Rail Timetable* issued in twenty-one parts, each covering all road (bus and coach) and rail services regardless of the operator; within a part of the greater London area.

A comparison of these time-tables shows their merits and failings. The British Railways Regional Time-tables are the most full for official information, but there is the difficulty of six separate volumes, of regional overlap and the lack of complete fare tables. *Bradshaw*, in contrast, is only in one volume, though it lacks extensive information about seat reservations and so forth. Although published monthly, most amendments are to be found on a loose sheet. The *A.B.C. Guide* is only of use for services and fares to and from London, though it has the most comprehensive collection of London suburban services.

Much has been unstated: this survey has dealt only with time-tables covering service within England, Scotland and Wales, and not time-tables dealing with services wholly or partly across the various Channels—*Cook's Continental Time-table*, the *Ulster Transport Time-table* or the *Eire State Railways Time-table*. Nor has mention been made of the various light railways which find hospitality on the pages of the British Railways Regional Time-tables. Where, then, does the librarian stand? Should he buy all these time-tables or one? The answer is difficult because although with much in common, these time-tables have marked differences. There is also the consideration of cost. Might it be suggested that the choice should be for the official *Regional Time-tables* because of their additional information; plus the *A.B.C. Guide* for fares and London suburban services; plus the appropriate local publication?

Our congratulations to Miss E. J. Willson, President of the A.A.L., who topped the poll by a large majority in the L.A. Council elections.

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Your Letters

T.L.S. = Those Lovely Saturdays

My first feeling, on reading Mr. Forshaw's letter in the October issue, which he says is a reply to my "affusion" (a good emotive word), was one of complete mystification. Not all of this has been dispelled, but in some of Mr. Forshaw's suggestions may be a solution, not only to our troubles, but also to the discontents of our elder brother profession—medicine—discontents of which I read during the summer in the correspondence columns of my favourite newspaper.

Many doctors feel that their hours and conditions of work compare most unfavourably with those of, say, school teachers. What they need, obviously, is a five-day week—9 to 5, Monday to Friday; no irksome night calls; no Saturday surgeries. Why should so many doctors have to forsake the rugger that they played at medical school?

Coupled with this reform would come a campaign by the B.M.A.—to be relied on in such matters as the L.A. is not—via TV, radio, and even perhaps printed matter. This would show how the public, in the past, had been bedevilled by a service run by doctors whose lack of aptitude for the job in hand was evidenced by their willingness to forgo that long week-end which is now every Briton's birthright. Had these niggers-in-the-woodpile had sufficient knowledge of what constituted medicine, perhaps they would never have entered the profession, and we should have had long since what we were now to glory in—a national five-day week for doctors, accompanied, of course, by a five-day week for illness as well. O brave new world! No more acute illness, no more childbirth, no more little aches and pains, in the small hours of night, in the sacrosanct stretches of the British Week-end. This picture of bliss would naturally bear a price-label, and it is to be hoped that the medical profession would not be satisfied with the modest demands made in less progressive days.

Such a scheme would be less easy for librarians, held back as we are by reactionary governing bodies of various sorts, to carry into effect; but no doubt Mr. Forshaw and I could work out something between us.

KENNETH THIMBLEBY, *Camberwell Public Library.*

WANTED: Lib. ass. No sats.

Mr. Forshaw's contribution so interested me that I was prompted to offer a few observations myself—the first time in history. My second reason for writing is because I am a very 'umble member of the profession and would not like to be confused with his "this is beneath us" brigade.

I congratulate him on his discernment when he states that "there are many people working in libraries to-day who have no right to be there . . . such people have no aptitude for the job in hand . . ." He then proceeds to give reasons for this state of affairs and goes on to advocate (among other things) closing down on Saturday afternoons. Once more I congratulate him on his discernment "that there are many people, etc." Here I feel I must accuse him of being vain and tending to look in the mirror too often.

When opening hours were first decided for Public Libraries, the majority of the public in its wisdom chose Saturday afternoon as the most convenient time for borrowing. In Liverpool, Saturday afternoon is the busiest period of the whole week in lending libraries, and I do not think the borrowers are deliberately attempting to thwart Mr. Forshaw's aspirations regarding free Saturday afternoons.

No doubt if Mr. Forshaw had his way, the public relations system which he so much desires would be able to explain to the public why some members of the profession would have us close when our services are most needed.

Finally to show what a reasonable being I am, I will make this concession to your correspondent. It might be that the libraries in Staffordshire County are not busy on Saturdays, in which case I extend my sympathy to those colleagues who are expected to kill time in such periods.

On the strength of my few remarks, there are those who will dismiss me as a "library type," but as stated earlier, I am very 'umble and will only accept the honour if it is thrust on me. A. C. O. ELLIS, *Liverpool Public Libraries.*

One Who Acted:

Protest to Nalگو

I should like to congratulate you upon your editorial in the October issue. Particularly upon your remarks relating to the participation of librarians in NALGO affairs. There are signs of improvement in this direction, but I think that very much remains to be done. Continued pressure from your columns would help enormously.

I have taken up the matter of gradings at local Branch level, and persuaded my Executive to write to Nalگو headquarters as follows:—

"This Committee regrets the delay in dealing with the Salary Award for Chartered Branch Librarians in charge of a staff of three, and strongly urges the Staff side of the NJC to insist upon the regrading of this category of Officer in the new APT II at least; and further urges that the Staff Side should not agree to any compromise which entails placing Librarians on any Special Scale which is inferior to the APT Scale."

We have had a reply which assures us that a meeting is to be held in the very near future to discuss the grading of library staffs, and that the Staff Side representatives will do everything they possibly can to secure an improvement in the existing situation.

I feel that though your medium other Branches could be induced to forward resolutions in similar vein, and that the combined pressure might produce results.

Best wishes to you and to the *Assistant*, which, in spite of all the recent criticisms, remains always very readable and vastly entertaining.

M. W. DEVEREUX, *Chairman, Bootle Branch, Nalگو*.

A.B.C. or BRADSHAW

P. S. Morrish criticised last month our tutor's comments in the September Examination Supplement on railway timetables. On page 212, Mr. Morrish further expounds on this subject. Meanwhile the tutor E. A. Willats, replies:—

P.S. Morrish is to be congratulated in spotting the fact that I used the phrase, London Passenger Transport, instead of London Transport Executive. I am, of course, aware of the 21 Local Road and Rail time-tables of the London Transport Executive, since these are in stock in my own Reference Library; however, they do contain the time-tables of the L.T.E. country buses, as well as those of other provincial bus services, like, for example, the Eastern National.

I totally disagree about the A.B.C. It gives fares to and from the main London terminal, suburban time-tables, and gives all the principal trains on main line routes. This is what the majority of library users want; also it's easy-to-understand form commends it to the layman in timetables' use. I agree that it is of no use for other main line services or cross-country routes or inter-connections.

I deliberately used the phrase "and/or"; I agree that the regional guides are superior to Bradshaw, but some smaller authorities may not want to stock all of them. Nor did I champion the A.B.C. above the others.

I do not see why anyone should want them all, but some larger systems may wish to be prepared for any eventuality, e.g., when one of the Regional ones is in use, or a complete survey is wanted, Bradshaw might suffice.

The exam. questions are supposed to test *all* eventualities.

For reasons of space, I could not include all matters relevant. For instance, I did not mention the British Railways Holiday Guides, a "must" for any Holiday Information Service.

But few candidates can be ignorant of them. I had already exceeded my allocation of space.

MOBILE MATURITY

Some mobile librarians have felt strongly enough to clutter up your magazine with trivialities. Let them feel even more strongly and think rather more maturely about their jobs; as, what is to be achieved and the methods used to achieve it.

Let them commit their thoughts to paper and to you. References to mobile libraries and work in on and about them are scattered throughout our periodical literature. The latest text of authority and value was published in 1950; and the most that one can say for text books in Librarianship is that some of them are post-war.

A collection of essays would at least advance the profession slightly, collating present practice, with a list of references in the periodicals.

One would also suggest a standard presentation of essays for ease of comparison.

D. T. CLARKE.

DANISH LIBRARIES

Although I agree with most of his conclusions, I think Leslie Greaves was hardly fair in his article *Contrasting Concepts* in his emphasis on the lack of use of Danish public libraries. I went on the same library Study Tour and I suggest he should recall that we were visiting libraries in glorious June sunshine; on several occasions we were shown round a library first thing in the morning—not a busy time in many British public libraries. It was my impression that the Danes make the most of a short summer and that the pattern of life is very different in the winter. Theatres, for example, close from May to September; and I remember visiting a new branch library in Frederiksberg which closed at 4 p.m. in June, July and August, but remains open until 8 p.m. for the rest of the year.

I feel sure that Mr. Greaves and I would not be disappointed if we were able to see the use being made of (say) the magnificent new Central Library in Copenhagen at this time of year.

K. A. STOCKHAM, *Essex County Libraries*.

Review

Reference books and bibliographies; a union list. Edited by L. M. Payne and Joan M. Harries. G.L.D., A.A.L. 1957. 6s. 6d. (c/o A. Bill, County Branch Library, The Stow, Harlow, Essex).

This volume is a combination with some revision of the G.L.D.'s earlier *Union List of Bibliographies* (1950) and *Union List of Reference Books* (1954). The libraries participating in this list number nearly 100 and cover Greater London with one or two further afield in the Home Counties. They are mainly public libraries, but a few special and university libraries are included. Some 800 works are listed, a selection of mainly major reference and bibliographical material.

The list is intended to help the student locate works to be studied in the course of library education, but two secondary uses should commend it to librarians outside London—it may help in book-selection for reference libraries, and it will undoubtedly save lecturers' and students' time in the verification of citations, although numbering of the entries would have helped still further.

Glancing through the list one is tempted, to make generalisations about book selection in reference libraries, not all of them complimentary. But the frequent appearance of the symbols for the University of London Library and Westminster Public Library, the only two locations for some works, is a sharp reminder that London still lacks major public reference libraries. The staffs of these libraries can see in this little volume the reason for the daily visits from libraries elsewhere.

Lithographic reproduction from typescript has apparently enabled the book to be sold at a very low cost. It can be recommended as a most useful aid to both Registration and Finals students with the obvious warning that the examinations no longer require a superficial knowledge of the number of reference books here listed.

EDWARD DUDLEY

Librarians and Booksellers

L. G. Lovell, Chief Librarian of Rotherham continues the debate :-

May I be permitted to take the Net Book Agreement argument a little further? So far from destroying the case for improved terms, Mr. Guy strengthens it. I buy my books by methods which cause booksellers little trouble: I provide full bibliographical details on orders, rarely buy except to firm order (and when I do buy on approval make an immediate decision on retention), order odd pamphlets direct from the publishing body by postal order, not from a bookseller, require one simple invoice only, and pay bills monthly. So, I think, do a great many librarians.

At the moment, in order that a bookseller may still make a living out of those hopeless librarians who resort to the slapdash practices Mr. Guy outlines, I get what I consider unreasonably poor terms from *my* suppliers. In fact, I am helping to pay for other people's approval services, complex invoicing, and general incompetence, not to mention paying the wages and expenses of booksellers' travellers who are redundant as far as I am concerned, but who do render a service to the librarians who buy by "flipping through the book-jackets." Naturally, if (as I advocate) an open tendering system replaced a flat 10 per cent. discount, the fact that I consider booksellers in my ordering methods, and do not require "servicing" (other than plastic jacketing and reinforcing, which I pay for) would mean that, on the amount I have to spend, I could get better terms than another librarian with the same amount to spend, but whose methods of buying the booksellers found wasteful and costly to themselves. Details of purchasing methods would be written into the specification governing the tenders, and both sides would have to abide by them.

Mr. Guy advocates "purchasing directly from the local booksellers" as there "we can see every book possible." Mr. A. C. Jones foresees reduced margins detracting from the quality of booksellers' services, and both of these gentlemen, together with Mr. Gann, refer to the meagre profits of bookselling. Mr. Guy, having I believe spent most of, if not all, his professional lifetime in the hardly typical district of St. Marylebone, may not perhaps realise what passes for a local bookseller in most provincial towns, but I am certain that both Mr. A. C. Jones and Mr. Gann can think of "local booksellers" whose assistants know much more about Christmas Cards and soft toys than books, whose "stocks" are already "debased" to a window or two of paper-backs (some even keep no stock and do no non-library trade *at all*), who have no bibliographical knowledge or resources whatsoever, and who, in fact, have about the same relationship to Harrison of Ipswich, Hudson of Birmingham, and several firms in Oxford and Cambridge as my village lending centres have to Manchester Reference Library.

What local bookseller can give us anything like the range of stock to select from (and, except from opening new service points most of us do little selecting from stock, anyway) that we can see at the warehouses of such library supply firms as Askew, Woolston, and for children's books Woodfield and Stanley? And, if I decide it is economical to provide them in that form and local booksellers cannot produce pre-bound, reinforced, or plastic jacketed editions what alternative have I to dealing with library suppliers?

I strongly deplore (as would, I am sure, our employing authorities if they knew of the idea) the suggestion implicit in all your three correspondents' letters that libraries have any sort of moral duty to keep booksellers in business by a hidden subsidy (for that is what artificially bad terms amount to) from the library rate. I have said before, and still say, and any librarian who keeps his eyes and ears open knows as well as I do, that *efficient* booksellers, small as well as large, local as well as library supplier, are doing very well out of the business at the moment. I have no more qualms about *inefficient* booksellers being (in Mr. A. C. Jones's words) "driven to their knees" than I have about incompetent sopranos not being able to get engagements (except in Great Britain) to sing the "Queen of the Night." We are better off without both.

Librarians and Copyright

In October, Neville Dain, Head of the Leeds Library School, discussed the terms of the Copyright Act, 1956, with regard to document copying. We now print the following exchange of letters in the hope that open discussion of any ambiguities may help to clarify the matter for all librarians.

From R. G. GRIFFIN, Librarian of The Chemical Society:—

I have just read the article by Mr. Neville Dain relating to the new Copyright Act, and it seems to me that it calls for comment. It may be that Mr. Dain has read something into the Copyright Act which I have missed or that one or other of us has misinterpreted certain clauses.

He says that "profit might be included in the charges of non-personal readers to be offset against the charges of personal readers." I cannot see that there is any provision in the Act for "non-personal readers" which I interpret as meaning corporate bodies. It is quite clear from the Copyright Regulations issued by the Board of Trade in consequence of the Act that any request must bear the personal signature of the person actually going to use the copy, and the form must carry the statement that the signature of an agent is not acceptable. Hence I do not see how a reader can be anything else but "personal."

Since the reader must sign a form complying with the requirements of the Copyright Regulations, it would seem reasonable that these forms could act as a register of copies supplied, and in fact in the Chemical Society Library such forms have been in use for a considerable period and have always been preserved for some five years.

Since this subject is of such importance, I would be interested to learn Mr. Dain's opinion on what I have said, and I think that further discussion in your columns would be worth while.

NEVILLE DAIN replies:—

I think that both your correspondent and I have accurately read S.I. 868 of 1957 "The Copyright (Libraries) Regulations," but I have chosen to see the possibility that libraries may distinguish private readers (whom I vaguely and therefore unsatisfactorily called personal readers) from readers who are employed on research projects for corporate bodies. Both kinds of readers would be personal in the sense that they may need copies of documents to support their particular (and therefore personal) work.

Nothing in the Regulations makes it inadmissible that an organisation, or an institute, or even a profit-making firm should allow an officer or other employee to obtain copies of documents for use in research programmes which are being carried out for the benefit of corporate

bodies. The only stipulation is that the person asking for the copy should be the person who will use it for research. Many institutes and firms are, in this as in other countries, organising research by their employees on an increasing scale, and any research work actually carried out by employees personally is nevertheless done for the sake of a corporate entity.

My distinctions may now be clear, and they are not in conflict with the requirements of the Regulations for personal signatures of the intending users of copies of documents.

The charges for copies may include as much profit as a library authority chooses to add to the costs of copies. The phrase "not less than the cost" (vide the Act para. 7 (1) (e), and S.I. 868/1957, para. 5(b)) would sanction the charging of prices which produce a profit. What is more significant is that the prices need not be uniform or unvarying. It would seem to be admissible for the cost to be assessed after profits have been taken into account. As the estimates of cost would be necessarily based on the aggregate of work, the net cost could be kept low by levying profits for some categories of copying and those categories might well be copying for persons engaged on research at both official and industrial addresses.

It is almost certain that the copies used by such persons will be paid for by a corporate body of some sort. The professional principle of the pre-war days that the rich should help to pay for the poor is still a good one, when the distinctions are applied to private persons and to comparatively wealthy bodies of persons. As I implied in my previous item, I have in fact encountered such a principle in this connection, and I hope very much that it will become more widely adopted.

The form of request specified in the Third Schedule of the Regulations may, of course, be retained permanently, but it would be convenient to retain also a ledger record which would include prices, as well as the other details. The forms might thus be arranged as an index to the ledger.

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RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES

by Brian C. Skilling

When the professional librarian uses the term "Restrictive practices," he is often involved in a discussion on the behaviour of the manual worker. He is probably proud of the absence of "restrictive practices" in the library profession. The older members of the Staff tell tales of how in times past they offed jackets and performed all manner of labour; not for them the selectiveness of to-day's manual worker. Yes, the professional librarian can take a quiet pride in the way he tackles almost any work that comes his way, from compiling bibliographies to sticking in date-labels, and while he does so his standard of living slides gently down.

In spite of increased technical qualifications the chartered librarian to-day is often earning less (in terms of spending power) than the man who held his post before the war. One reason for this is that the majority of librarians have failed to show that their work is skilled. There are times when all of us doubt the knowledge in library matters of those who serve on Library Committees, but they are not fools, and if they visit the library and see professional staff performing semi-skilled tasks, then they are surely justified in paying semi-skilled rates, and in thinking that librarianship consists largely of shuffling books and dealing them out again. The public, also, are capable of distinguishing between routine and other work. What are they to think of the qualifications of a reference library staff who are to be found dusting the books in their "idle" moments? This latter occurred in a progressive library with photo-charging in the lending department.

I am sure each of you could name other examples of waste if you stop and think, but the staff in question seldom do stop to think; they are all rather nice people, and their seniors are all rather nice people, and their predecessors always did it anyway. So it goes on. We cry for more time to practise "real" librarianship, and yet we fill part of our days attending to matters that could quite easily be handled by general assistants.

What is needed is the introduction of "restrictive practices" into public library work. Before all the professional gentlemen recoil in horror, let me point out that our employers will be the first to gain, since they will not be paying a skilled wage (however poor) for work that could be done by a G.D. assistant. Having accepted that fact, how are we to impose these "restrictive practices"? Not by striking, that would be unprofessional, and, I suspect, few of us could afford to. There are much gentler methods, first, to all Chief Librarians, Deputies, and Heads of Departments—Are any of your chartered librarians engaged at any time in dusting books, shelving books, repairing books, or any other job of an unskilled nature? If so, isn't it time you stopped this dreadful waste of staff? For the individual the problem is more difficult, but a useful time to make a stand is when you change appointments, then you can indicate tactfully those tasks which you do not consider professional. If, of course, you have been at the same library "man and boy," then it is still more difficult, but it may be possible to adopt the "Project Ploy." Look around for some big job that needs doing, draw the attention of authority to it, and offer to take the matter in hand. Before long you will find yourself so busy that there won't be time for you to do the shelving, and what is more—no one will expect you to. The unimaginative may be at a loss for projects, but they are not really difficult to find: What about

the special collection; is it properly catalogued and classified? How long is it since the reserve stock was weeded out? Are all the civic holiday and town guides up-to-date copies? What about subject check-lists? Start with a subject you are interested in, and soon you will find yourself immersed, and what is more you will be doing work that might be termed professional.

Whilst I am firmly convinced that chartered librarians should be selective in their work, I also believe that they should show breadth of outlook by being prepared to do any job in an emergency and not allowing culture to be brought to standstill because the juniors have gone sick. With this proviso, I say, let us at once declare ourselves in favour of "Restrictive practices."

A BOUND TO REPETITION ?

by Tony Shearman

The latest book published by the Library Association (*Classics of Librarianship*, by J. L. Thornton, 1957) shows no attempt by the Publications Committee to produce books that are physically exciting to possess. The typography (no mention of the type face used) is conventional and the general design "safe"; the paper is fluffy and porous; and the boards are covered with a green cloth of a most unpractical kind: it is sticky to the touch and quickly becomes dirty. Was all this done to keep the book like its companion (*Mirror for Librarians*, Grafton, 1948)? For the sake of economy? Or for lack of inspiration? At 17s. 6d. to L.A. members enough could surely have been done to have avoided these deficiencies without showing up the poverty of Grafton's book design and the poverty of the Publications Committee, financially or inspirationally.

Lack of invitation should not put off any librarian who is interested in his profession, however. The contents are on the whole worth representing, though the older extracts are more satisfying than the later ones. The pall of old battles and conflicts of personality still hangs over the turn of the century, where Doctor John Dee's proposal to Queen Mary for a national library is absolutely convincing in its antiquity (1556). It would be salutary for writers of letters to the professional Press to use this book as an anthology of perennial topics and to make sure that what they are about to write has not been said before in the same or better words. Indeed what I have just written is better said by Johnson (Idler, No. 85): "To exact of every man who writes that he should say something new would be to reduce authors to a small number . . . Yet surely there ought to be some bounds to repetition. Libraries ought no more to be heaped with the same thoughts differently expressed than with the same books differently decorated. . . Writers might take care to inform themselves before they inform others"; and by H. R. Tedder (page 94 of *Classics of Librarianship*): "The librarian who writes is lost" is much more to the point, and if librarians would make good catalogues instead of indifferent books, the world would be much better served by them."

The *Assistant* to-day is being read in a world mighty different from the world J. C. Dana knew. There is a hydrogen bomb and a space satellite; there is Jayne Mansfield and there is skiffle. Yet only recently in the *Assistant* these things that Dana said in 1896 have been laboriously resaid: "Look first to your personal growth." Get into touch with the world. Let no one point to you as an instance of the narrowing effects of too much of books," and, "We are, to put it bluntly, of very

little weight in the community" (both on page 132 of *Classics of Librarianship*).

Mr. Thornton gives the warning in his preface: "Some librarians have achieved fame for the systems they have built up, for their personalities, or for their influence on the development of contemporary librarianship, yet wrote nothing outstanding that affected the profession, or that can be read to-day with profit." Read this book then and you may not be lost when your turn comes for inclusion in the inevitable anthology of the future.

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